



ASSOCIATED STUDENTS INC
SF STATE UNIVERSITY

ASSOCIATED STUDENTS RESOLUTION # 2-24-16-08

Resolution Regarding Support of the College of Ethnic Studies

WHEREAS, San Francisco State University is home to the first and only College of Ethnic Studies in the nation; and,

WHEREAS, the creation of the College of Ethnic Studies was made possible by the activism of several historical organizations of color, in partnership with the Black Student Union, under the umbrella of an organization called the Third World Liberation Front at San Francisco State University in the 1960s; and,

WHEREAS, the current College of Ethnic Studies represents generations of student, faculty and staff activism - getting to the core of San Francisco State University's vision, mission and core values; and,

WHEREAS, In 2008, the CSU experienced a major budget cut - San Francisco State University responded to this by applying an equal across-the-board cut, resulting in an inequitable 10% cut to the College of Ethnic Studies; and,

WHEREAS, The 10% cut to the College of Ethnic Studies left it with insufficient funds to operate effectively, of which Vice President & Provost Dr. Sue Rosser provided funds to allow the programs of the College of Ethnic Studies to continue functioning; and,

WHEREAS, Between 2008 and 2016, the College of Ethnic Studies program has sustained 15% budget cuts in seven years; and,

WHEREAS, President Leslie Wong stated in an email to the student body on February 23rd, 2016 that, "When budget gaps have been discovered in other programs, a strategy was developed that allowed the program to continue while arranging to pay back its debt to the University within a set timeframe. In the case of the College of Ethnic Studies, no reimbursement plan has been requested. But the college has been asked to adapt to new budgetary discipline moving forward"; and,

WHEREAS, San Francisco State University published the University's Strategic Plan in 2015 with the intention of this plan guiding the work and decision-making for administrators from the top-down; and,

WHEREAS, In the Strategic Plan under the value “Courage,” it states “SF State will SUSTAIN programs and activities that leverage the linguistic, cultural and social diversity of our students, faculty and staff to advance our mission and education goals”¹; and,

WHEREAS, In the Strategic Plan under the value “Life of the Mind,” it states that “SF State will...”²

- 1) “ALIGN our courses and our curriculum with our sense of mission, our values and our goals for student learning”³
- 2) “EMPOWER faculty and departments to set high standards for professional achievement and provide sufficient support, including workload relief for scholars to excel in pure research, applied research and creative works.”⁴
- 3) “BECOME a national leader in innovative teaching, scholarship and creative activities that build on our strengths.”⁵

WHEREAS, In the Strategic Plan under the value “Equity,” it states that we have “A commitment to equity sees educational access and academic quality as reciprocal goals, affirms that resources are distributed according to need, empowers students who make the world a better place and eliminates barriers to success.”⁶; and,

WHEREAS, In the Strategic Plan under the value “Community,” it states that “SF State will...”⁷

- 1) “CREATE a campus culture where students, staff and faculty are valued, respected, taken care of and treated fairly.”⁸; and,
- 2) “INCREASE our responsiveness to student, staff and faculty concerns...”⁹; and,
- 3) “STRENGTHEN an academic community based on collaboration, consultation, critical reasoning and diversity.”¹⁰; and,

WHEREAS, As a central aspect of its stated mission, the California State University affirms that it is committed:

- 1) “To prepare students for an international, multi-cultural society.”¹¹; and,
- 2) “To prepare significant numbers of educated, responsible people to contribute to California's schools, economy, culture, and future.”¹²; and,
- 3) “To provide public services that enrich the university and its communities” (California State University Mission Statement)¹³; and,

¹ *Strategic Plan*. San Francisco State University. <planning.sfsu.edu>

² *Strategic Plan*. San Francisco State University. <planning.sfsu.edu>

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ *Draft Report for the Task Force on the Advancement of Ethnic Studies*. California State University. May 2015. Page 7.

¹² *ibid.*

¹³ *ibid.*

WHEREAS, Significant events, such as the student demonstrations at CSU Long Beach over the alienation of the department of Ethnic Studies, in the past few years have galvanized community support and attention from the Chancellor’s office; and,

WHEREAS, the CSU Chancellor issued a two-year moratorium in the negative alteration of ethnic studies programs, until the conclusion and report of the Task Force on the Advancement of Ethnic Studies; and,

WHEREAS, The CSU Chancellor prioritized Ethnic Studies programs with the creation of the system wide Task Force on the Advancement of Ethnic Studies (referred to herein as the ‘Task Force’) in January of 2014, of which President Leslie Wong was apart of; and,

WHEREAS, The Task Force determined in a report that the top four challenges to the advancement of ethnic studies, as determined from the task force survey, were as follows¹⁴:

- 1) a lack of a sufficient budget to sustain ethnic studies units; and,
- 2) uncompensated work by ethnic studies directors and chairs; and,
- 3) the inability of ethnic studies units to offer the number of courses needed to maintain the integrity of their programs; and,
- 4) the inability to replace faculty when they leave, retire or die; and,

WHEREAS, the task force determined that although budgetary limitations are a “concern” of many academic units, “...ethnic studies programs face funding challenges that most other programs do not, including increased advising and mentoring expectations from students and collaboration and support expectations from community stakeholders.”¹⁵; and,

WHEREAS, the task force determined that in the realm of best practices of the types of institutional support that would advance ethnic studies, which were identified from the survey results, they are:¹⁶

- 1) “budget allocations, including tenure-track hires and staff”;
- 2) “training advisers in ethnic studies courses and more accurately counting and accounting for double majors in ethnic studies and then making the figures available on campus data systems.”;
- 3) “support of on-campus ethnic studies student and faculty events and activities as well as community outreach (particularly in efforts of recruitment and then retention of students of color)”;
- and,
- 4) “compensate faculty (which could be release time) to develop/revitalize ethnic studies courses and programs which include mentoring students and junior faculty. Mentorship is crucial to students and faculty of color and ethnic studies could be further advanced in terms of retention of students and faculty if this practice was institutionalized as part of the process.”; and,

WHEREAS, the task force concluded the report with 10 recommendations which, if acted upon, would “...not only contribute significantly to the advancement of Ethnic Studies, but also greatly benefit

¹⁴ *Draft Report for the Task Force on the Advancement of Ethnic Studies*. California State University. May 2015. Page 17.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ *ibid.* Page 22-23.

students, their communities, society and the university in its mission of providing a quality education...”, those recommendations are the following:

Recommendation 1: Make Ethnic Studies a lower division and upper division GE requirement throughout the CSU system.¹⁷

Recommendation 2: Increase and maintain regular and consistent hiring in Ethnic Studies in order to ensure its vital sustainment and strategic growth.¹⁸

Recommendation 3: Support curricular development in ways that strengthen Ethnic Studies departments and programs, increase enrollment and open access to a wider range of students and curricular options.¹⁹

Recommendation 4: Revise and strengthen advising practices on and off campus... [as well as] online systems to reflect the university’s valuing Ethnic Studies as vital to its educational mission.²⁰

Recommendation 5: Aid in fostering and creating a climate conducive to reaffirming Ethnic Studies’ central role in diversity and equity initiatives as they relate to people of color.²¹

Recommendation 6: Strengthen and expand initiatives on community engagement and partnerships.²²

Recommendation 7: Build on and expand best practices of both Ethnic Studies and the various universities of CSU, incentivizing the embrace and use of these practices through providing and supporting appropriate resources, policies and programmatic initiatives.²³

Recommendation 8: Conduct system-wide and campus level 360° Diversity/Equity assessment examining the unique challenges and contributions of Ethnic Studies, its related academic and campus life initiatives and future promises.²⁴

Recommendation 9: Establish a formal relationship with the statewide Ethnic Studies Council in CSU’s ongoing effort to advance Ethnic Studies and realize its mission.²⁵

¹⁷ *Draft Report for the Task Force on the Advancement of Ethnic Studies*. California State University. May 2015. Page 27.

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ *ibid.* Page 28.

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ *ibid.*

²² *ibid.* Page 29.

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ *ibid.* Page 30.

²⁵ *ibid.* Page 31.

Recommendation 10: Maintain the moratorium on any negative changes to Ethnic Studies departments and programs during the period of the review, discussion and response to this report.²⁶

WHEREAS, In 2013, the California Faculty Association (herein referred to as the ‘CFA’) published a letter to CSU University Presidents in response to the events at CSU Long Beach, expressing a “...deep concern for an emerging pattern on a number of campuses within the CSU—an initiative to drastically cut existing race and ethnic studies departments or to merge them into larger departments”;²⁷ and,

WHEREAS, the CFA notes a trend in campuses trying to find places of inefficiencies to further iron out in light of severe budget cuts, but warns that a decision to reflect that onto ethnic studies programs have “...significant social and political impact”;²⁸ and,

WHEREAS, the CFA argues that “...[ethnic studies] departments educate students in the cultural literacies required if they are to be effective leaders capable of addressing the complicated social and cultural issues that are a part of an increasingly diverse U.S.”;²⁹ and,

WHEREAS, the CFA concludes their letter by asking University Presidents to consider campus-wide moratoriums on the negative alteration of ethnic studies programs and to engage in campus-wide discussions about the major race relations events that are impacting the nation;³⁰ and,

WHEREAS, The Academic Senate of the California State University (herein referred to as ‘ASCSU’) unanimously approved a resolution on March 21st, 2014 entitled, “In Support of Ethnic Studies in the California University System” for the purpose of addressing the events that took place at CSU Long Beach, Chancellor White’s decision to convene the Task Force and the Chancellor’s decision to place a moratorium on negative alterations in ethnic studies programs;³¹ and,

WHEREAS, The ASCSU resolved the following³²:

- 1) “...urge CSU campuses and the Office of the Chancellor to vigorously support the growth and development of Ethnic Studies by providing adequate funding and support”; and,
- 2) “...urge that changes in status made to Ethnic Studies departments or programs only occur in consultation with campus Ethnic Studies faculty and through established campus curricular review processes”; and,
- 3) “...encourage campuses to evaluate Ethnic Studies programs, as we evaluate all academic programs, by recognizing their academic merit and educational and societal value rather than purely financial considerations”; and,
- 4) “...commend the California State Legislature for adopting Assembly Concurrent Resolution 71 – Relative to Africana Studies (2013) which expressed support for the continuation of Africana

²⁶ *ibid.*

²⁷ Letter to Campus Presidents Regarding Ethnic Studies. California Faculty Association. August 29th, 2013.

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ *Resolution 3164*. Academic Senate of California State University. March 21st, 2014.

³² *ibid.*

studies departments, programs, and related projects in California’s institutions of higher education”; and,

WHEREAS, Ethnic studies programs have garnered significant support from the California Legislature, specifically the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC), where they introduced, through Assemblymember Shirley Weber, ACR 71 to the California Assembly Committee on Higher Education in 2013;³³ and,

WHEREAS, Asm. Weber recognized the significant strife experienced by students, faculty, staff and community members in the creation of an ethnic studies programs, “Formal Africana studies programs and departments at California’s universities resulted from student-led movements dating back to the 1960s. These movements included demonstrations and student protests, where students, faculty, and community members demanded university courses relevant to them and their communities.”³⁴; and,

WHEREAS, it is acknowledged that “[Ethnic Studies]... promote a view of ethnic groups as significant contributors to the history and diversity of California and the United States history” and is an important aspect to a well-rounded education;³⁵ and,

WHEREAS, Asm. Weber acknowledges that “Support for postsecondary Africana studies departments, programs, and related projects, including financial support, will allow for the continued guidance and teaching of a new generation of students who will enrich and contribute to California policy, education, and government.”³⁶; and,

WHEREAS, A 2011 review of research on the value of ethnic studies published by the National Education Association found that, “there is considerable research evidence that well-designed and well-taught ethnic studies curricula have positive academic and social outcomes for students...both students of color and White students have been found to benefit from ethnic studies”;³⁷ and,

WHEREAS, For underrepresented minority students, ethnic studies courses are associated with positive changes in student achievement and attitudes towards learning.³⁸ And there is evidence that minority students in such programs have improved academic skills and graduation rates when compared to their Anglo counterparts, at least in high school.³⁹; and,

³³ *Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 71 - Relative to Africana Studies*. California Legislative Black Caucus. September 27th, 2013.

³⁴ *ibid.*

³⁵ *ibid.*

³⁶ *ibid.*

³⁷ Sleeter, C.E. (2011). *The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies*. Washington, D.C.:National Education Association.

³⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹ Cammarota, J., and A. Romero. 2009. “The Social Justice Education Project: A critically compassionate intellectualism for Chicana/o students.” In W. Ayers, T. Quinn, and D. Stovall, eds., *Handbook for Social Justice Education*. New York: Routledge.

WHEREAS, Given the CSU’s emphasis on closing the achievement gap between underrepresented minority students and white middle class students, and increasing retention, graduation, and overall academic success for underrepresented minorities.⁴⁰; and,

WHEREAS, Several student groups including Ethnic Studies undergraduate & graduate, SFSU Black Student Union and CA Student Union have formulated a list of demands related to the preservation and advancement of Ethnic Studies; and,

WHEREAS, the Associated Students of San Francisco State University serves as the official voice of students on this campus and holds a responsibility to respond to events that have a significant impact on students; therefore,

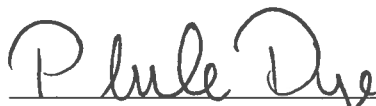
BE IT RESOLVED, The Associated Students of San Francisco State University stands in solidarity with the students, faculty and staff of the College of Ethnic Studies and their demands; and,

RESOLVED, we strongly reaffirm the urge of President Wong and University Administration to correct the consistent pattern of lack of transparency in University decision-making, as aforementioned in the A.S Resolution against a pouring rights agreement; and,

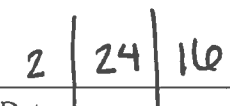
RESOLVED, we urge University Administration, in particular President Leslie Wong and the Vice President & Provost Sue Rosser, to actively engage and respond to student, faculty, staff and community concerns in regards to the College of Ethnic Studies; and,

RESOLVED, demand that there is no action taken that negatively impacts the College of Ethnic Studies, and emphasizes actions that not only preserve, advance the College of Ethnic Studies.

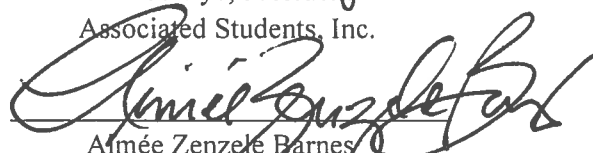
Resolution adopted by the AS Board of Directors on February 24, 2016:



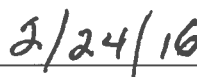
Phoebe Dye, President
Associated Students, Inc.



Date



Aimée Zenzele Barnes
Interim Executive Director



Date

ATTACHMENTS:

- [A]: Draft Report - CSU Task Force on the Advancement of Ethnic Studies
- [B]: San Francisco State University Strategic Plan
- [C]: 2014 Assembly Resolution 271 to the California Assembly Committee on Higher Education (Weber)

⁴⁰ Sleeter, C.E. (2011). *The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies*. Washington, D.C.:National Education Association.

[D]: Sleeter, C.E (2011)

[E]: California Faculty Association Letter to University Presidents

[F]: Academic Senate of the CSU Resolution 3164

[G]: CSU Chancellor Moratorium on Ethnic Studies
