

CFA Latina/o Caucus

Resolution to Support Ethnic Studies Programs at CSU Stanislaus

Whereas until recently there were four tenure-track faculty in the Ethnic Studies Program at CSU Stanislaus; and

Whereas the last two tenure-track faculty of the program will leave the institution, effective December 24, 2013; and

Whereas the administration of CSU Stanislaus has expressed opposition to replacing any of the four tenure-track positions in Ethnic Studies; and

Whereas administrators have made proposals to modify the curriculum of the Ethnic Studies Program with the aim of making it feasible to support the program merely by hiring one additional temporary part-time faculty member, in lieu of the four tenure-track; therefore be it

Resolved that the Assembly of the California Faculty Association authorize President Lillian Taiz and Affirmative Action VP Cecil Canton to send the attached letter to CSU Stanislaus Campus President Joseph Sheley; and be it further

Resolved that copies of the letter be sent to CSU Chancellor Timothy White and State Senator Ricardo Lara.

*Supported by:*

*Council for Affirmative Action*

*African American Caucus*

*Asian Pacific Islander Caucus*

*Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender Caucus*

*Teacher Education Caucus*

*Women's Caucus*



October 12, 2013

Dr. Joseph Sheley, President CSU, Stanislaus

Dear President Sheley,

The Council for Affirmative Action and the Board of Directors of the California Faculty Association wrote to you on 29 August, 2013 to express their deep concern over an emerging pattern of drastic cuts to Race and Ethnic Studies Programs and Departments. Some departments or programs are being downsized, some are being merged with other departments, and attempts are being made to eliminate programs at some campuses.

The Ethnic Studies Program at CSU Stanislaus, a designated Hispanic Serving Institution with more than 32% Hispanic students, is facing significant diminishment. By the end of Fall 2013, the Ethnic Studies Program at CSU Stanislaus will no longer have any tenure track / tenured faculty, having lost four positions over the last few years. The two remaining tenured faculty in the Ethnic Studies program, one specializing in Chicano/a Studies and one in Asian American Studies, have chosen to resign their positions as of 24 December, 2013 rather than help with what they believe amounts to the elimination of the program they have put so much effort into.

While it may seem tempting to find "institutional efficiencies" in the name of austerity, there are larger issues at stake here. We believe that those issues should and must drive decisions that have significant political and social impact for our communities and our nation. In this particular historic moment our nation has come face to face with the reality that issues of race and ethnicity still plague our country, something we see reflected in the current national debates about immigration, immigrant communities, social class and poverty, in the challenges prospective students face in accessing opportunities for education, in the under-representation of people of color in the teaching profession and in the changing demographics of California's schools. The fact that President Obama has spoken frankly on multiple occasions about the impacts of our failure to grapple with issues of race and ethnicity only highlights the important role that universities can and should play in creating positive social change.

The discipline of Ethnic Studies was born in the CSU – The People's University. CSU Ethnic Studies programs were and are at the forefront in assisting students to engage in balanced, critical and open discussions of racial and ethnic matters. Our country desperately needs to address those matters and find resolution for the inequities that exist in our society. CSU Ethnic Studies programs educate the students who can lead our societal discussions of those matters.

It is also true that Ethnic Studies programs are at the core of the CSU's mission and vision. Not only do they serve majors, minors and concentrations, they enable students to fulfill General Education requirements in cultural diversity and critical thinking, requirements that are crucial to the production of well-rounded, thoughtful and active citizens. Ethnic Studies programs are deeply committed to actively assisting our students as they develop cultural literacy and hone the personal and professional skills that enable them to become effective and inspirational leaders. Ethnic Studies programs reflect the mission and vision of the CSU system by providing role models, mentors and advisors to first generation students, to students of color and to other students as they seek to enrich their roles in our communities.

We call on you, President Sheley, to declare a moratorium on administrative reduction of or elimination of the Ethnic Studies program at CSU Stanislaus. We ask that you authorize searches to replace at minimum the two departing tenure track faculty members in the program. Doing so will, at least for a time, preserve the academic integrity and richness of the curriculum and viability of the Ethnic Studies program at CSU Stanislaus. Only through these actions will the Ethnic Studies program be able to flourish, to grow, and to continue in its commitment to work with and partner with the ethnic communities that embody the rich and vibrant tapestry of cultures in the Central Valley, in California, and in our nation.

In solidarity,

Lillian Taiz, CFA President

Cecil Canton, CFA Associate VP Affirmative Action

Cc: Chancellor Timothy White  
Senator Ricardo Lara