

CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA

ACADEMIC SENATE

GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

REPORT TO

THE ACADEMIC SENATE

GE-001-201

GE Area F: Ethnic Studies

General Education Committee

Date: 10/12/2020

Executive Committee  
Received and Forwarded

Date: 10/14/2020

Academic Senate

Date: 10/28/2020  
First Reading

TITLE OF REFERRAL: GE Area F: Ethnic Studies

BACKGROUND:

The GE Committee received referral GE-001-201 during its September 30<sup>th</sup> meeting and were instructed by the AVP for Academic Programs and Chair of the Senate that it would need to move through the committee with a report so that it would be included in the Senate Executive Committee meeting on October 14, leaving the GE Committee with only one full day to discuss. It was clear to the committee that this wasn't like other referrals, with true a true consultation process. This was something that was presented as already being decided by the Chancellor's Office whether we approve or not. We read and fully understand the proposal, which creates a GE Area F in Ethnic Studies, removes the American Cultural Perspectives requirement, and takes away Area D3. We had a respectful and robust discussion about our support for ethnic studies as a requirement, but there was much consternation about the removal of D3 and the tremendous impact this will have on our students, faculty, programs and departments, and our entire General Education program. When it came up for a vote, other than determining that the unapproved list of Core Competencies included in Attachment 1 in the referral need to be removed, the Committee unanimously abstained for the vote, and focused instead on a letter expressing our concerns, which is included in the Discussion section below. We understood that Chancellor's Office mandate is required in order that our campus have a compliant curriculum in the 2021-22 catalog, so we are honoring the Chair of the Senate's request that we have our report completed within the ascribed timeline. The Committee looks forward to the discussion within the entire Senate body on this referral in hopes that all voices are heard and perhaps alternative agreements might be made.

RESOURCES CONSULTED:

Department Chairs, Senate Sub-Committee Chairs, EWS Chair and Faculty, CPP Faculty through consultation by GE Committee Members, AVP for Academic Programs, Chair of the Senate.

DISCUSSION:

The General Education (GE) Committee declares its enthusiastic support for the inclusion of Ethnic Studies as a requirement at Cal Poly Pomona. Additionally, we are committed to implementing a 3-unit requirement in Ethnic Studies for all graduating students based on the set timeline of said law.

That said, the GE Committee seeks to raise concerns that the process imposed upon us by the Chancellor's Office, at the time this referral needed to be voted on by the Committee, has involved little to no faculty consultation and limited consultation with the CSU Council on Ethnic Studies, while depicting decisions as produced by shared governance. The Chancellor's Office

did send a request for consultation late in the process, and the Chair of the GE Committee received these materials in the evening of October 8, too late for the Committee to fully review the request and consider the implications of this late-stage consultation plan and how, if at all, it will impact their decisions.

The limited consultation with the CSU Council on Ethnic Studies is particularly egregious as collaboration with that body was specifically mandated in the language of AB 1460. As approved by Governor Gavin Newsom on August 17, 2020, the law reads as follows:

[t]he California State University shall collaborate with the California State University Council on ethnic studies and the Academic Senate of the California State University to develop core competencies to be achieved by students who complete an ethnic studies course pursuant to implementation of this section. The council and the academic senate shall approve the core competencies before commencement of the 2021–22 academic year.

Ethnic Studies experts on our campus inform us that this did not occur. Instead, the Chancellor's office has acted unilaterally and, worse, claimed consultation when no such consultation occurred.

Further, with little to no faculty consultation, the Board of Trustees passed changes to Title 5 reducing Area D and creating Area F. The GE Social Sciences requirement (Area D) takes many forms at our institution and has provided students with a valuable breadth of knowledge that has served them to take on the diverse challenges of our world. Being forced to make a tradeoff between one extremely important GE requirement and another without any consideration for the effect this will have on the education of our students or consultation with the faculty who teach these subjects is the epitome of administrative overreach. We support, instead, having a collaborative conversation about ways to execute the law that does not erase the importance of the social sciences.

Finally, requiring that all such courses be cross-listed for the Ethnic and Women's Studies may have unforeseen impacts on their major. Having time to consider such impacts is a key duty of the General Education Committee in consultation with Ethnic and Women's Studies.

The process thus far has turned our vote in the Committee into a rubber stamp, asking us to simply approve decisions that have already been made by the Board of Trustees and via Executive Order, which hasn't even been issued yet, that interprets the law and implements an interpretation of it in haste. These actions circumvent the prospect of faculty governance.

When combined with previous rulings from the Chancellor's office, such as their demands for changes to GE Area C, and their top-down attempt to revise the whole of the GE program, this requirement continues a troubling trend of unilateralism by the Chancellor's Office that violates the principle and value of shared governance. Indeed, we encourage the Academic Senate to draft their own memorandum of opposition in line with other CSU campuses that have done the same (CSUN, CSUDH, SFSU).

Furthermore, the truncated timeline has prevented the GE Committee from doing its due diligence in examining the full impact of this referral and other viable alternatives. There are a number of other alternative ways that campuses have integrated this new requirement, but without adequate time to examine this, the GE Committee is being asked to accept an option without the requisite knowledge to make an informed decision.

In sum, while the law itself sets out a short timeline, we call upon the Chancellor's Office not to subvert faculty rights and recognize that our campus community has the right to formulate our own solution to the implementation of Area F. It is true consultation and shared governance that makes good decision-making at our campus. This must be how we move forward, considering the impact of such a significant reorganization of our General Education program and the considerable impact this will have on students and faculty.

We also want to be included in the Senate record the letter sent from the CSUCES to the Chancellor's Office dated October 12, 2020 regarding consultation and compliance with the law, attached. We are in solidarity with the spirit of this letter. We also all special attention to the area in bold since we think this incapsulates many of the sentiments of the Committee.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Removal of Core Competencies included in Attachment 1 in the referral because these have yet to be determined.

The GE Committee unanimously abstained from voting on GE-001-201 because it was clear to us that an up or down vote would not make a difference in the trajectory of the referral. But we also know that it needed to get before the Senate for a larger campus discussion, a discussion that didn't occur before we received this referral. We understand that the Chancellor's Office recommendations are required in order that the campus have a compliant curriculum in the 2021-22 catalog, and we are therefore providing those recommendations to the Senate.

Attachment -



October 12, 2020 (sent October 11, 2020 by email)

Dear Vice Chancellor Blanchard via Dr. Van Cleve:

Yes, we are confirmed for Wednesday for the agreed upon agenda for our first formal collaboration meeting. Also, we have received the draft executive order. We write to convey some technical requests, provide our evaluations of the draft executive order as of this time, and to share our finalized Core Competencies.

First, for the record and transparency of this process, we are asking that the meeting be recorded and streamed, in the manner that the Board of Trustees does, where the participants are “in the room” and there is a streaming “gallery” so that the meeting can be observed by interested colleagues, as there is great systemwide interest in these deliberations. Finally, though you will not lower the FAQ, could the CO indicate on the FAQ or any documents clearly that you are speaking only for the CO unless the triad of partners has agreed to the fact. Similarly, by way of copy of this message, we request that Chair Collins and the ASCSU only represent themselves in all communication, and we will promise the same to each of you.

**Regarding the draft CO executive order, the CSUCES Steering Committee has reviewed the draft, discussed it in the meeting of our AB1460 Implementation Working Group (IWG) with a membership of over 70, and received feedback from our broader membership and non-Ethnic Studies colleagues, as well as compared it to various campus senate resolutions, which the CSUCES has received. Here are our observations to date:**

- 1. In your cover letter, you continue to use only the the concept “consultation” to describe the working relationship among the CO, CSUCES and ASCSU. We reaffirm that the formal definition of our exchange, according to the letter and spirit of AB1460, is captured by the word *collaboration*. We acknowledge that we will discuss the meaning and means of our collaboration on Wednesday.**
- 2. We appreciate the CO’s language reinforcing and reaffirming that the Ethnic Studies requirement will be fulfilled by Ethnic Studies courses created and offered by Ethnic Studies faculty.**
- 3. We reaffirm that the proposal to insert the Ethnic Studies requirement into a newly proposed area F in GE:**
  - a. is not in the law;**
  - b. is added with no compelling rationale and complicates a simpler and more effective implementation as a free-standing graduation requirement;**

- c. **proposes limiting the requirement to lower division, which we oppose and propose in its stead the option for campuses to choose either lower or upper division, or both;**
- d. **is used to justify limiting units in area D, which we also oppose, particularly because of the harm it will do to allied disciplines and the quality of undergraduate education;**
- e. **encumbers the requirement into one of the curriculum's most complex policies, GE, requiring unnecessary workload on an already over-burdened faculty;**
- f. **and, because of the complexities of GE, unnecessarily opens the Ethnic Studies requirement to possible unknown, unanticipated or unintended consequences or interventions.**

**Therefore, we reaffirm our support for a free-standing graduation requirement as supported by a number of campus senates, allowing campuses to maximize its positive impact and coordination with their local curricula, and respecting reasonable campus autonomy, authority, and responsiveness to student need.**

We are also attaching the final version of the CSUCES Ethnic Studies systemwide core competencies. You will recognize them to a degree because they were derived from those approved by the CSUCES Steering Committee as those derived from several years of deliberations across our membership meetings and sent to you as an opening initiative for our collaboration. They were subsequently worked on by a subgroup of the IWG mentioned above, approved by the full IWG and the Steering Committee, and then vetted for endorsement from our registered membership, numbering over 500 across the campuses in the system.

We look forward to the first formal collaboration meeting of the CO, CSUCES AND ASCSU leadership teams who will set the on-going working relationships for representatives of our implementation teams.

Sincerely

The Steering Committee of the CSU Ethnic Studies Council:

Professor Melina Abdullah (CSULA)  
 Professor Teresa Carrillo (SFSU)  
 Professor Maulana Karenga (CSULB)  
 Professor Linda España-Maram (CSULB)  
 Professor Kenneth Monteiro (Chair-SFSU)  
 Professor and Associate Dean Boatamo Mosupyoe (CSU Sacramento)  
 Professor and Associate Dean Marcos Pizarro (SJSU)  
 Professor Craig Stone (CSULB)

cc. CSUCES AB1460 Implementation Working Group (IWG)  
 CSUCES membership