

CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA

ACADEMIC SENATE

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

REPORT TO

THE ACADEMIC SENATE

AP-005-212

**Movement of Ethnic and Women's Studies from the College of Education and
Integrative Studies to the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences**

Academic Programs Committee

Date: 11/03/2021

**Executive Committee
Received and Forwarded**

Date: 02/09/2022

Academic Senate

**Date: 02/16/2022
First Reading**

BACKGROUND:

In the summer of 2021, the then-Dean and then-Provost convened two working groups with faculty from various departments in the College of Education and Integrative Studies (CEIS). One of these groups was charged to consider the future of CEIS, another to consider the future of Ethnic and Women's Studies (EWS). EWS faculty were specifically not invited to join the working group on the future of CEIS and were instead asked to work on the future path for their own department. With the creation of an Ethnic Studies GE requirement (Area F) pursuant to AB 1460, the EWS department is about to experience significant growth, and so it was a reasonable time to contemplate their future trajectory. Their charge included consideration of both the practical issues around rapid growth and the greater goal of increasing the visibility of their discipline on campus and beyond. However, their exclusion from the working group on the future of CEIS loomed large in the summer's work and indicated a need to consider not just the work of the department but also the department's intended home moving forward.

The EWS faculty working group produced a very thorough analysis of the history and intellectual roots of both their department and their wider disciplines, and the synergies that they enjoy with disciplines and endeavors in multiple departments at Cal Poly Pomona. The intersecting disciplines studied in the EWS department have obvious synergies with the many humanities and social sciences disciplines in the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences (CLASS). At the same time, EWS enjoyed a long, productive, and amicable relationship with the other departments in CEIS. There are disciplinary overlaps with the interests of many faculty in Interdisciplinary General Education (IGE) and Liberal Studies. Also, increasing attention to ethnic studies in particular and equity issues more broadly throughout education gives EWS natural overlaps with the various CEIS programs that prepare educators and educational leaders. Perhaps most importantly, when considering the future of a group of teachers and scholars, EWS has good working relationships with colleagues in CEIS, relationships that should not be lightly reconsidered.

The full story of the work behind the resulting document on the future of EWS is a complicated one, which the members of the Academic Programs Committee heard from many different people offering quite distinctive perspectives. The first portion of the report offer a very balanced perspective on how the EWS department can align their work with either CEIS or CLASS. Prior to the final chapter, perhaps the strongest statement of an explicit intent to move from CEIS to CLASS is found in the final sentence of the Executive Summary:

This report aims to be a useful tool that will help inform administration, CLASS, and our colleagues of our intent towards an Implementation plan that will begin with dialogue and momentum in Spring 2021 to move our department to CLASS.

In the second chapter, there is considerable discussion of how EWS can align with either college, but there is particular enthusiasm for the work of the CLASS Inclusive Excellence

Committee, stating:

EWS Faculty will consider active engagement with the current 2021 CLASS Inclusive Excellence Committee as part of an Implementation Plan and would look forward to an invitation to join CLASS faculty on this important committee.

The final chapter of the report, "Critical Growth Investments for EWS," details efforts too numerous to list here, all of them ultimately focused on the success of our diverse students. The chapter includes several statements of keen interest in a Transitional Plan that will support these efforts.

The overall picture is of a report that supports a move from CEIS to CLASS, but also of a department that could do laudable work in either College, and a process where support for remaining in CEIS was voiced, considered, and ultimately given a place in the report.

These factors informed the work of the Academic Programs (AP) Committee throughout our own process. From the beginning the AP Committee saw the obvious disciplinary synergies between EWS and CLASS, and for all the strengths in their relationship with CEIS, viewed from a high-level disciplinary lens the move to CLASS would seem obvious.

However, the Committee also looked at questions of process, planning, and resources. A move is a process, not just a destination, and the move affects the starting point as much as it affects the mover and the ultimate destination. The Committee thus focused its inquiry on three issues:

- Is this move strongly supported by the faculty in EWS and their prospective neighbors in CLASS?
- How will the move affect CEIS?
- Will all parties to the move be able to manage the logistics of the transition?

The consultation parties listed below reflect these concerns. The Committee's work included many conversations, some involving the full Committee and others involving smaller working groups. Members of the Committee spoke with nearly all EWS faculty multiple times, and different Committee members participated in different conversations. The move of a rapidly-growing department from one vital college to another necessitated this level of intense consultation.

RESOURCES CONSULTED:

Deans and Associate Deans, all colleges

Department Chairs, all colleges

CLASS and CEIS Chairs, all departments (additional questions beyond general queries to all chairs)

All EWS faculty

University Library, Dean and Chair

Senate Budget Committee

Senate Elections and Procedures Committee

Senate Committee Chairs

Dr. Iris Levine, Provost

Dr. Hend Gilli-Elewy, Dean, College of Education and Integrative Studies

Dr. Sara Garver, Dean, College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences

Dr. Laura Massa, AVP for Academic Programs

Kinesiology and Health Promotion faculty

DISCUSSION and RECOMMENDATION:

The AP Committee is confident that EWS faculty fully support moving to CLASS. In multiple conversations it became clear that opinions were not unanimous at the start of the process, but no big decision should be unanimously supported prior to careful consideration. There was considerable dismay over the top-down nature of the process; exclusion from the working group on the future of CEIS made it clear that the then-Dean and then-Provost already had a very clear preference and had not given adequate weight to established working relationships between EWS faculty and the rest of CEIS.

Nonetheless, EWS faculty overwhelmingly have roots in humanities and social sciences, both in the academic units in which they previously trained and in the scholarly associations with which they interact. Many faculty (though far from all) supported the proposed move on that basis from the start. Conversations between small groups of EWS faculty and AP Committee members made it clear that consensus emerged during the process, perhaps in large part out of respect for those disciplinary roots.

Moreover, CLASS faculty and administrators have been supportive of the move. Communications with CLASS faculty made it clear to the AP Committee that the social justice commitments of CLASS faculty align naturally with the interests of EWS, and they genuinely look forward to welcoming their new colleagues in EWS.

Regarding the interests of CEIS, there is widespread concern, and understandably so. CEIS is in the process of considering a number of issues central to its future, and the administration's decision to exclude EWS from those conversations signaled an intent to impose a decision from the start of the process rather than reach a decision through the process. The future of CEIS should be shaped by the faculty who will be responsible for its long-term work, not by external fiat.

Resources are, of course, a significant element of the concerns among various parties, and also the support from various parties. Historically, EWS has generated approximately a third of the FTES for CEIS, due to their strong GE offerings. Their FTES will only increase in light of Area F and the associated growth of Ethnic Studies enrollments. The other CEIS departments, conversely, mostly emphasize teacher education, an endeavor that involves many field experiences and supervised projects. These labor-intensive efforts are crucial to the mission of the CSU and the well-being of

the communities that Cal Poly Pomona serves, but they inevitably generate FTES less efficiently than GE-heavy departments.

In light of these resource considerations, people throughout CEIS have very significant concerns about the proposed move. It is the opinion of the AP Committee that teacher education requires a budget model that looks at additional factors beyond FTES generation, and that the mission and commitments of the CSU make such a model a moral imperative. These views were shared by numerous parties in consultation, including many parties outside of CEIS, i.e., parties who do not stand to gain from such a budget model.

The formulation of a new CEIS budget model is beyond the scope of this referral, but the AP Committee can report that consultation with relevant parties provides cautious optimism about the fiscal future of CEIS. The Committee strongly recommends ongoing attention to this matter not only by CEIS and the administration, but also by the Senate, particularly the Budget Committee. Pertinent to ongoing Senate attention, the AP Committee consulted with the Elections and Procedures Committee and verified that, based on current data, the number of Senators representing CEIS will not decrease in the aftermath of an EWS move from CEIS to CLASS.

In terms of the fiscal future of EWS, the move to CLASS might well be in their interests. There is strong (and appropriate!) interest from CLASS departments in developing cross-listed Ethnic Studies courses, in light of both their disciplinary synergies and the changes brought by Area F. Having EWS in CLASS will also help to align the interests of the departments and disciplines offering most (though not all) Area F courses moving forward.

Finally, regarding transitional issues, the AP Committee is cautiously optimistic about a smooth process. The most recent departmental move was of Kinesiology and Health Promotion (KHP), from CLASS to Science (roughly a decade ago). Consultation with KHP faculty indicated that day-to-day operations for students and faculty in a well-run department should not be substantially changed by College-level changes. The AP Committee was also satisfied with assurances from the EWS Chair, CLASS Interim Dean, and CEIS Interim Dean regarding communication and planning in the coming semester. In the area of greatest operational need for EWS—hiring new faculty to grow for Area F implementation—the Interim Provost also indicated that funds earmarked for the purpose from AB 1460 can be used to support their hiring efforts, alongside the use of AB 1460 funds to support Ethnic Studies cluster hires in other departments.

The AP Committee is thus confident that the most immediate aspects of the transition will be handled well.

However, EWS faculty expressed concern that, at least in Fall 2021, they were given little information from the administration regarding transitional plans. This speaks to a concern that once the desired move received departmental blessing the administration may have lost interest. Supportive and transparent work at the College level is crucial for addressing this concern but will not be sufficient. Some of the concern arises from the fact that the report produced by the EWS faculty addresses more than just disciplinary synergy and increased hiring to support Area F. With growth in the department will come greater breadth of expertise, and the EWS faculty are keenly interested in correspondingly diversifying their offerings, including (but not limited to) new undergraduate minors and emphases, a certificate program, a graduate program, an Ethnic Studies Center, and greater effort to recruit majors. Support for any new curricular offering will, of course, require moving through normal curricular processes, particularly with input from new hires. Still, it is crucial that administrative interest in their future not begin and end with a decision to move in the desired direction.

While the AP Committee recommends that EWS move from CEIS to CLASS, the clearly top-down fashion in which this move was first considered means that future proposals to substantially move or restructure departments must receive at least as much scrutiny as the current move. Faculty are not only experts in their subject matter, but also in their local operational needs; abundant experience in universities and beyond shows the shortcomings of top-down planning.

In light of these considerations, the AP Committee recommends that the Department of Ethnic and Women's Studies move from the College of Education and Integrative Studies to the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences, effective Fall 2022. The Committee further recommends continued attention to the budgetary model of CEIS, and close scrutiny of any further moves or restructuring of departments, to ensure that decisions are guided by a ground-level understanding of operational needs.

The recommendation to move was supported by 9 of the 12 AP Committee members in attendance on Wednesday, January 26, 2022. The other 3 members abstained.