

**Chancellor's Office, CSU Council on Ethnic Studies and Academic Senate of the CSU
Collaborative Meeting on the Ethnic Studies Requirement
October 21, 2020
Summary of Discussion**

The following is a summary of discussions held via Zoom among members of the Academic Senate of the CSU, members of the CSU Council on Ethnic Studies and representatives of the Chancellor's Office concerning the implementation of an ethnic studies requirement systemwide.* This discussion was a follow up to an initial meeting hold on October 14, 2020.

In Attendance

Academic Senate of the CSU:

Robert Keith Collins, American Indian Studies, SFSU, ASCSU Chair

Catherine Nelson, Political Science, Sonoma, Immediate Past Chair

Beth Steffel, Design, CSUSB, Secretary

Dave Speak, Political Science, Pomona, ASCSU Executive Committee, Member-at-Large

Nola Butler-Byrd, Counseling and School Psychology, SDSU, ASCSU Executive Committee, Member-at-Large

Susan Schlievert, Curriculum and Instruction, CSU Fresno, Academic Affairs Committee, Chair

Gwen Urey, Urban and Regional Planning, Pomona, Academic Affairs Committee, Vice-Chair

Romey Sabalius, CSU Faculty Trustee

CSU Council on Ethnic Studies:

Teresa Carrillo, Professor, Latina/o Studies, SFSU

Maulana Karenga, Professor and Chair, Africana Studies, CSULB

Linda Maram, Professor, Asian and Asian American Studies, CSULB

Theresa Montano, Professor, CSUN, Chicana/o Studies

Kenneth Monteiro, Professor and Acting Director, Psych/Ethnic Studies, SFSU, Chair CSUCES

Boatamo Mosupyo, Professor of Ethnic Studies and Associate Dean, Sac State

Marcos Pizarro, Professor Chicax Studies and Associate Dean, SJSU

Joely Proudfit, Professor and Department Chair of the American Indian Studies Department, CSUSM and Director of the California Indian Culture and Sovereignty Center

Craig Stone, Professor Emeritus, American Indian Studies, CSULB

Charles Toombs, Professor, Africana Studies, SDSU

CSU Chancellor's Office:

Loren Blanchard, Executive Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs

Alison Wrynn, Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Programs, Innovation and Faculty Development

Leo Van Cleve, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Chancellor's Liaison to the Senate

Nathan Evans, Chief of Staff, Academic and Student Affairs

Lori Putnam, Communications Manager

*Meeting notes were taken by Chancellor's Office staff and previously shared with (but not approved by) the other groups.

Welcome and Land Acknowledgment

Dr. Blanchard welcomed colleagues from the Council of Ethnic Studies as well as members of the statewide academic senate and thanked them for reconvening after an initial meeting on the new ethnic studies requirement. He recognized there were items still under discussion as a result of the last meeting, and the goal of today's discussion was to follow up on them.

Dr. Proudfit was introduced as an alternate for Dr. Risling Baldy who was unable to attend. Dr. Proudfit was also invited to provide a land acknowledgment in Dr. Risling Baldy's stead. In her remarks, Dr. Proudfit expressed her gratitude for participating in the meeting and acknowledging the virtual meeting was taking place on the unceded territory of California, home to nearly 200 tribal nations. She shared that honoring the original inhabitants through land acknowledgment is a critical step to working with native peoples in the stewardship and protection of cultural resources and homeland, as well as honoring ancestral grounds and supporting their enduring strength and resilience. Speaking in Carlsbad as a Luiseño/Payomkawichum, Dr. Proudfit stated that land acknowledgment itself is a small gesture but meaningful in collaboration with informed, intentional action. Institutions have an obligation to native peoples to educate themselves and, more importantly, an obligation to be respectful and kind to original nations so as not to support erasure. She reminded meeting participants of "Nothing about us, without us" and shared that together, we can effect change beyond institutional walls and the walls in our mind. She encouraged participants to type in the virtual chat box the name of the tribal land he/she/they are a guest on and to seek out more information on the California Indian Culture and Sovereignty Center [website](#).

Agenda

Dr. Blanchard thanked Dr. Proudfit for her remarks and provided a brief overview of the meeting's agenda which included: revisiting core competencies and determining how best to proceed; discussing the issue of the requirement as general education versus freestanding; discussing the question of upper vs. lower division units; and addressing any questions regarding the current FAQs. He shared an intention to stay within the scheduled one hour for the meeting, with closing remarks from Dr. Collins, Dr. Monteiro and himself.

On Core Competencies

Dr. Blanchard began by acknowledging the good conversation concerning the revised core competencies from the previous meeting. He invited Dr. Collins to provide any updates from the senate. Dr. Collins welcomed and thanked meeting participants for their presence. He reminded everyone the meeting dates of the Academic Senate (November 5-6) as well as the Academic Affairs committee (November 4). He then asked Dr. Schlievert (as chair of the Academic Affairs committee) to provide the update.

Dr. Schlievert's update included comments and questions that arose from a previous meeting of the Academic Affairs committee. Upon reviewing the revised core competencies recommendations provided by the council, the committee shared its support of adding wording in the first core competency. There was a concern and question regarding the term "produced by" and a request for further clarification. Does that mean only scholarship by others outside of the four groups would be excluded? As written, it could be possible that important knowledge would be restricted. Dr. Monteiro responded that the "produced by" referred to the required content, not the limited content. As a result, someone could be doing comparative work and could present work not by an Ethnic Studies scholar. However, the requirement is that there be work by Ethnic Studies scholars.

Dr. Schlievert stated that made sense and proceeded to share a comment that the committee appreciated the expansion of language in regard to core competency number three. There was an additional question regarding core competency four and the meaning behind "critically assessed". The committee would prefer "critical review" instead of "critically assessed" as it impacts assessment. Dr. Monteiro responded that this could be something to take back to the council. He stated the preciseness of the question deserved deliberation and thought a response could be managed fairly quickly. He acknowledged the difference between a student assessing knowledge and the actual assessment of a student and curriculum. Dr. Blanchard asked if any additional information was needed at this point from the council regarding the revised core competencies. Dr. Monteiro responded there was none and was aware of the upcoming senate meeting. Hearing no other request for discussion on the revised core competencies, the meeting proceeded to the next agenda item.

On Requirement as General Education or Freestanding/Upper or Lower Division

Dr. Blanchard asked Dr. Wrynn to provide additional context, from an operational standpoint, regarding placing the requirement in general education. She began by stating she would address both the question of GE vs. freestanding requirement as well as lower and upper division units, and that this could be separated if needed. Dr. Wrynn shared three points to consider. First this is a systemwide requirement. The law is clear that CSU is a system and frequently legislators do not think of the CSU as 23 entities. Second, the CSU needs to implement this consistently across our campuses in order to comply with laws other than AB 1460, in particular SB 1440 and SB 440 related to the Associate Degree for Transfer. And finally, this requirement needs to be clear to students so that administrative barriers are not placed in their way.

As way of example, Dr. Wrynn then provided a number of scenarios where either a lack of clarity or consistency could create barriers to graduation. Such examples included an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) business major where placement of the requirement in the upper division would require restructuring the major or transfer students who may not know which CSU campus they may attend when beginning their community college experience and may discover they don't meet the requirement for their first-choice campus. By embedding the requirement in lower division GE breath across the system, all students would have clarity on how to complete the requirement. Dr. Wrynn welcomed comments on both this thought process

as well as potential solutions for the entire system. Having served on two campuses—as well in the system office, Dr. Wrynn encouraged participants to think broadly about implementation of a CSU-wide requirement to include all 23 campuses.

Dr. Blanchard thanked Dr. Wrynn and continued to describe the thinking as to why the requirement would be placed in GE. Ethnic studies can serve as one of the anchor programs for the CSU, and being an anchor provide opportunities for colleges and departments of Ethnic Studies to capitalize on the requirement in order to grow and flourish. He could not agree more with Dr. Wrynn that this is a systemwide requirement. Speaking frankly, he shared his concern that some may want to simply keep what they have in place. For maybe one campus that can happen, but the reality it is there are not 23 flavors – it is a systemwide requirement. He reiterated this is the consultation period and he is looking for ideas, inviting all campuses to provide feedback. Looking at this from AB 1460 as well as SB 1440, what are the alternatives the CSU can implement recognizing this requires three hours to replace another three hours – whether it be lower or upper level.

At this point the discussion was open to comments. Speaking on behalf of the council, Dr. Monteiro respectfully stated they don't accept all the presuppositions concerning the requirement as GE. He shared that almost all remaining living people on that task force were in this meeting and that this has not been their feedback. According to Dr. Monteiro, campuses are reporting that many students taking ethnic studies already are those in business and engineering and graduation rates are going up because of it. He stated the council had given a lot of thought on the issue, and agreed that “one size doesn't fit all” and from their vantage point, AB 1460 simply refers to a university requirement. He expressed the council's concern regarding the impact of the last executive order and that any attempt to add another GE requirement would derail the GI 2025 plan. On the topic of transfer students, Dr. Monteiro stated many of the community colleges don't have ethnic studies programs, so students would still need to find a way to take it in their junior or senior year. He concluded his remarks by saying what is needed is very simple: a CSU policy that this is a university requirement in Ethnic Studies that lists the disciplines taught and implemented by Ethnic Studies faculty, and that each campus take into consideration those items raised by Dr. Wrynn regarding implementation.

In her feedback, Dr. Proudfit encouraged everyone to think about student needs and the overwhelming burdens a new GE requirement would place on campuses and curricular committees if “Area D” were reduced by three units. She stated that the CSU currently offers ethnic studies courses that fulfill the requirement and students find ways to meet it. Citing examples of business and nursing students who take an ethnic studies course to better prepare them for the population they will serve, she recommended to keep it simple, encouraged that the council's proposal be considered and asked for flexibility so students have the ability to take the three units in any of the 120 units needed to graduate. She stated her concern that on her campus, there is a two-year back log because their GE committee can't review curricular matters fast enough. She believes the council proposal would be effective while creating the least harm to other departments. At this time, Dr. Blanchard and Dr. Proudfit confirmed a shared understanding that the requirement would need to fit within the current 120 hours.

Dr. Pizarro responded that individual programs always have to adapt to CSU requirements. What he hears from corporate partners is that they want students with critical thinking skills which, according to Dr. Pizarro, are fostered in upper division Ethnic Studies classes. He stated that community colleges may not have the capacity to teach ethnic studies, to teach to these core competencies, and the CSU's ability to support them is beyond our capacity. He stated that he believes a standalone requirement honors and meets the tenor of the law with a focus on upper division. Dr. Blanchard remarked that the requirement needs to be looked through the lens of 23 campuses, and recognizing that some have well developed programs while others do not. Dr. Pizarro acknowledged this was a complicated situation, but maybe one that could be addressed by how it is on-ramped and that it doesn't need to be fully implemented by fall 2021.

Dr. Carillo stated she was looking for a kind of elegance in implementation and application of the requirement across the system. She didn't see how a stand-alone requirement is less elegant than one that specifies GE or upper or lower division. With a standalone, students could use existing GE classes in the upper division that already have GE certification. Her classes meet upper division D and ethnic studies. The elegance she is looking for is contained within the council's plan with a standalone requirement that could be filled at the upper or lower division.

Dr. Toombs added his support of his ethnic studies colleagues' remarks and reiterated that the law doesn't require GE or upper or lower division. He emphasized that the group speaking today represents 500 or more members now active in the council. If ethnic studies faculty are to have a voice in implementation, this is certainly the place where they should have it. Dr. Nelson expressed her curiosity as to why the requirement could not be a standalone with parameters, such as kinds of courses attached to it. She expressed her concern regarding the potential impact on the American Institutions requirement. Dr. Nelson added if it does become a general education requirement, which she is not for, why can't there be a choice of lower or upper division.

Dr. Speak expressed his gladness that this had become a polishing conversation rather than a building conversation. He was not persuaded by the clarity argument, and shared that faculty would have a hard time distinguishing between a GE and a general requirement. He believed the extent of distinction between GE or general is less salient within the system even more so outside the system. Dr. Stone shared that at Cal State Long Beach 400-500 high school students take an ethnic studies course and that there are extended courses that can fulfill requirements. However, when there is the GE process, who will do this? All this work needs to be done, and it is not elegant. There is huge pressure placed on the few people who have to implement this. Dr. Monteiro repeated the position that the council is not just against GE, it is for three units freestanding in upper or lower division. According to Dr. Monteiro, the council is in touch with all 23 campuses and the likelihood of a student having to go to 123 units is almost zero. The requirement fits in more than one place. How could the CSU standardize it? Put it in the bulletin, three units needed before you graduate.

Leo Van Cleve made a clarification concerning the implementation timeline. The bill says courses and competencies are to be available by fall 2021; it also says 2025 graduates must meet

the requirement. So the graduation requirement and catalog rights, assuming a four year graduation rate, begin in 2021. As a result, requirements need to be on the books in fall 2021. That means a lot of these issues have to be worked out, not every course needs to be developed by 2021, but policy changes and curricular structures need to be done by then. Dr. Wrynn added an additional clarification that upper division GE courses can meet lower division requirements. If an upper division ethnic studies course already exists, students could choose to take it. However a lower division option still needs to be available.

On FAQs Document

Dr. Blanchard addressed the final item on the agenda concerning a Frequently Asked Questions document regarding the new requirement. He stated as has been done in the past, when contemplating a new method or requirement FAQs are developed to provide clarification. As people ask questions, the FAQs are a way to centralize questions and answers. It is designed to be a fluid document and corrections are made and questions are added along the way. Dr. Blanchard asked if there were any additions or revisions to the current draft. Dr. Mosupyo asked if on the document it is stated that it is subject to change? Dr. Wrynn responded that it has the date it was created posted and when revisions are made the date is updated. Dr. Mosupyo requested the addition of a statement that says the FAQs are fluid and subject to change. Dr. Carillo added that the document was not contributing to clarity as it stated the requirement as a lower division in general education, and that was premature. Given the hour was almost up, Dr. Monteiro confirmed he would collect any other statements from the council.

Closing Remarks

In his final remarks, Dr. Monteiro expressed his appreciation for the collegial nature of the meeting. He then observed that the notion of having a large, open meeting before a more complete product was created didn't feel useful. At first the notion of everyone coming together sounded great, but perhaps there is not enough work to bring them around something? In a constructive spirit, he suggested the larger meeting may be best served when this group is closer to an agreement. Dr. Collins thanked everyone for their feedback and encouraged more conversations that allow everyone to see how the council understands AB 1460. Dr. Karenga added his feeling for a sense of urgency and the importance when meeting next time for some flexibility and willingness to respond in a productive way. He added a good faith effort could make these meetings even more productive.

Dr. Blanchard responded that this is beyond good faith, that he is here not just to listen but to best understand how to take the thoughts presented here today and give it consideration moving forward. He added this is not only time sensitive but of importance to the CSU and exceptionally important for ethnic studies. He acknowledged this has been something that many in the meeting had fought for a long period of time. Fought is the word he has heard used by those in the meeting and by Dr. Weber. And he wants to ensure what was fought for is reflected in the final determination. Dr. Blanchard suggested he work with Dr. Monteiro and Dr. Collins on how best to structure the October meeting to make it productive. He added that the senate would meet in

two weeks and will include representatives from the council. He is still seeking comments to the draft policy by November 2. He encourage others to continue to provide feedback and alternatives. It is important to state what is proposed instead of what it opposed. A solution would be one that benefits all students and provides them an ability to select the courses they want to meet this requirement. He added he didn't expect the executive order to be issued until after the November trustees' meeting. He concluded by stating he found great value in these meetings and appreciated everyone's time and productive thoughts.