

A Resolution of the MiraCosta College Academic Senate Creation of an Ethnic Studies Department (R. 1-21)

WHEREAS, California adopted AB 1460 in August 2020 (codified in California Education Code Section 89032), which created an Ethnic Studies general education graduation requirement for the California State University (CSU) that will commence in the 2021–22 academic year and which will require campuses to provide lower division courses meeting Ethnic Studies core competencies¹ that either have an Ethnic Studies prefix or are cross-listed with an Ethnic Studies course starting in Fall 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges called "for developing Ethnic Studies as an AA degree discipline/program and/or a component of the General Education Curriculum" as far back as 1988 with Resolution Number 5.04 and as recently as the fall 2020 plenary adopted Resolutions Numbered 9.03 and 9.04², which respectively recommended "the California Code of Regulations Title 5 §55063 be amended to include an ethnic studies graduation requirement for California community college associate degrees" and establishment of "an ethnic studies general education requirement for California Community colleges by adding a fifth area to Title 5 §55063 (b) (1) entitled (E) Ethnic Studies"; and

WHEREAS, Ethnic Studies is an interdisciplinary academic discipline clearly defined by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office³ focused on four historically defined racialized core groups—Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latina/o American—offered through various disciplines including Ethnic studies, Chicana and Chicano studies, Latina and Latino studies, African-American studies, Black studies, Asian-American studies, Native-American studies, Africana studies, Mexican-American studies, Indigenous studies, Filipino studies, La Raza studies, and Central American studies; and

WHEREAS, establishing distinct epistemological and pedagogical practices aimed at transforming oppressive systems while improving student achievement outcomes is central to the historic mission and contemporary scope of Ethnic Studies⁴, granting it greater "influence on course offerings," the "power to define itself intellectually and academically," and the ability "to build a sound, coherent, and intellectually challenging program" rather than a "haphazard sampling of whatever courses may be available through a number of different departments"; and

WHEREAS, MiraCosta College does not offer Ethnic Studies designated courses due to the limited number of Ethnic Studies discipline faculty among tenured and associate faculty who successfully meet the minimum qualifications; and

WHEREAS, creating an Ethnic Studies Department, especially with at least one full-time faculty expert to help lead the department, empowers faculty to work on curricular and programmatic innovations with Ethnic Studies pedagogy and paradigms, which would not be possible if Ethnic Studies was entirely reliant on existing subject areas/departments/disciplines and programs;

¹ <https://calstate.policystat.com/policy/8919100/latest/>

² https://asccc.org/sites/default/files/Fall%202020%20Adopted%20Resolutions%2011.9.2020%20FINAL_0.pdf

³ <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Educational-Services-and-Support/What-we-do/Educational-Programs-and-Professional-Development/Minimum-Qualifications>

⁴ See "The History, Development, and Future of Ethnic Studies" by Evelyn Hu-DeHart, "The Co-opting of Ethnic Studies in the American University: A Critical View" by Jesse M. Vazquez, and "What is and is NOT Ethnic Studies" Letter to the State Assemblymembers Medina and Weber by Kenneth Montiero.

WHEREAS, Ethnic Studies coursework and programming is in keeping with the MiraCosta College's Mission, Vision, and Values statements and commitment to becoming a racially just campus.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the MiraCosta College Academic Senate in accordance with the recent Academic Senate Resolution of the Declaration that Black Lives Matter and a Call to Action (R. 1-20), support the creation and expansion of Ethnic Studies courses with respect and acknowledgement of the academic field of study, historically rooted in distinct epistemological and pedagogical practices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution serve as the basis to establish high priority for one full-time Ethnic Studies faculty position in the upcoming faculty request ranking process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the MiraCosta Academic Senate, in collaboration with relevant college governance committees and administration, support an independent Ethnic Studies workgroup led by a tenured faculty member who possesses the appropriate minimum qualifications in Ethnic Studies, to plan for meeting the needs of students and to grow and nurture Ethnic Studies course offerings in a sustainable way leading to the establishment of an Ethnic Studies Department at MiraCosta College.