

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, BAKERSFIELD
ACADEMIC SENATE
Minutes
Thursday, November 4, 2021
Zoom Video Conference
10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Members: A. Hegde (Chair), M. Danforth (Vice-Chair), B. Frakes, R. Gearhart, A. Grombly, V. Harper, H. He, J. Kraybill, C. Lam, A. Lauer, J. Li (Alt.), S. Magaña, M. Martinez (Alt.), J. Millar, S. Miller, J. Moraga, M. Rees, A. Rodriguez, A. Sanchez, D. Solano, B. Street, J. Tarjan

Visitors: A. Anderson, T. Anthony, J. Armentor, D. Boschini, S. Bozarth, A. Brasher, M. Brown, M. Burroughs, EJ Callahan, D. Cantrell, C. Catota, R. Dean, C. Dell’Amico, M. Dotson, K. Driscoll, R. Dugan, F. Gorham, D. Gove, F. Graves, L. Gubkin, K. Holloway, D. Horn, D. Jackson, A. Jacobsen, D. Knepp, C. Lane, A. Layton, Y. Lee, C. Livingston, M. Malhotra, T. Matthews, H. McCown, C. Okey-Dike, I. Otaegui, I. Pesco, M. Quarles, D. Rasmussen, K. Raynes, D. Riggins, S. Roberts, J. Rodriguez, M. Rush, T. Salisbury, M. Sanchez, S. Saner, A. Smith-Spirit, J. Stark, A. Turner, L. Vega, A. Waller, R. Weller, L. Zelezny

Absent: J. Millar, A. Sanchez

1. Call to Order

A. Hegde called the meeting to order. He read a statement acknowledging CSUB’s stewardship of the land of the Tejon Tribe.

2. Approval of Minutes

E. Correa moved to approve the October 21, 2021 minutes. B. Frakes seconded. Approved.

3. Approval of Agenda

A. Hegde suggested working on resolutions before hearing the sub-committee reports. Find sub-committee reports in the agenda. E. Correa moved to approve the agenda. S. Miller seconded. Approved.

4. Announcements and Information

- President’s Report – L. Zelezny
 - Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting November 9, 2021 – The President will attend
 - CSU/CFA salary negotiations – The President is vocal on fair outcome for faculty

- Latino/Hispanic Serving Institution – Thank you to J. Moraga, T. Monreal, I. Cargile, and A. Sawyer for grassroots leadership and hosting Hispanic Heritage event
- Strategic Plan – Thank you to members of subcommittees. She's pleased with their progress
- Campus Climate Survey – Open Forum on the data, November 29 at 1:00 p.m.
- Formation of Ethnic Studies (ES) Department – Thanks in advance to the Senate for considering the importance of this opportunity for CSUB students
- Comment: Thank you to President Zelezny for her advocacy of faculty and for ES (E. Correa)
- Elections and Appointments – M. Danforth
 - Dean of the Library (4) FT Tenured General Faculty and Library – elected:
Amanda Grombly – Librarian
Kristine Holloway – Librarian
Chris Livingston – Librarian
Ying Zhong – Librarian
 - School Elevation Exploratory Committee (SEEC) – volunteered:
Senate Executive Committee: Elaine Correa and Mandy Rees
 - Call for Interest in Various University Appointed Positions - ends today:
Academic Petitions Committee (A&H position)
Accessible Tech Initiative (ATI) Steering
Accessible Tech Initiative (ATI) Working Group
ADA Accessibility Policies Manual Task Force
Alumni Associate Board
Campus Police Advisory Council
Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Commission
Faculty Ombudsperson Tenured Full Professor
Intercollegiate Athletics Advisory Committee (IAAC)
Student Recreation (SRC) Advisory Board

Teacher Education Advisory Committee (TEAC)

University Strategic Planning & Budget Advisory Committee (USP & BAC)

5. ASCSU Report

None

6. Provost Report (V. Harper)

Searches: AVP IRPA, AVP GRaSP, Dean NSME, and Dean BPA are underway. Dean Antelope Valley and Dean Library search committees to follow.

Workload: A list of ways we can address workload issues, especially for faculty. He is working with AVP FA, D. Boschini, and will bring items to the Senate for implementation.

Classroom visit: Thank you to K. Szick for having the Provost visit her Genetics class. It was great to be in a face-to-face class with students. We expect a tremendous number of more face-to-face classes in the Spring.

Q: Timeline for the implementation of workload ideas? (E. Correa) A: The ideas will be presented to the EC in November. Some ideas have CFA boundaries.

Comment: There are faculty who are not doing service. There are faculty who are not even living in the Bakersfield area. These things have been tolerated for a long time.

Many faculty would like to see this lack of availability and participation be addressed. (A. Lauer)

Response: Service is part of the workload expectation. The shared responsibility of leading this institution is important. (V. Harper)

Response: It's irritating to be in high-load committees, like URC where we've already identified that there's not enough release time to do a good job, and to see other faculty who are not participating in anything and there are no consequences. (A. Lauer)

Response: There are 255 faculty positions available on various committees. Thank you to those participating. We are looking for more diversity in the Senate and its sub-committees. A. Hegde (Academic Senate Chair) is happy to talk to anybody who wants to learn more about what's involved. M. Danforth (Academic Senate Vice-Chair) is also a resource. (A. Hegde)

7. Committee Reports and Requests

(Minutes from [AAC](#), [AS&SS](#), [BPC](#) and [FAC](#) are posted on the Academic Senate Webpage)

a. Executive Committee (M. Danforth) (deferred)

- b. ASI Report (S. Magaña) The ASI Board will discuss
- Meeting management software
 - Mid-year elected officers and the roles of the governing members
 - Meeting calendar Spring and modality relative to health and safety protocols
 - Calendar overview for 2022-2023 ASI meetings
 - Take-Out-Tuesday surveys resumed – If a department is looking for student feedback, reach out to S. Magaña.
 - Vaccine registration requirement and effect on various holds – please remind students to respond to request for action, as needed
- c. Academic Affairs Committee (J. Tarjan) (handout)
- d. Academic Support & Student Services Committee (E. Correa) (handout)
- e. Faculty Affairs Committee (M. Rees) (handout)
- f. Budget & Planning Committee (C. Lam) (handout)
- g. Staff Report (S. Miller) – Nothing to report

8. Resolutions

New Business

RES 212208 Academic Master Plan (AMP) 2022-23 through 2031-32 – C. Lam introduced on behalf of the BPC and AAC. It is a formality for CSUB to submit an annual AMP to the Chancellor's Office with an update for the next ten years. This year, there are not many changes. AAC and BPC reviewed the plan and decided to approve it. (C. Lam) While the AMP gets approved by the BOT, it is not an assurance that the program(s) will be offered. It becomes an option for programs to develop sometime in the future. They still need to go through the standard process of coming through all levels of curriculum committees review and through the Senate. (A. Hegde)

RES 212207 Formation of Ethnic Studies (ES) Department – C. Lam introduced on the behalf of AAC and BPC. The committees recommend to the President, the approval of the Ethnic Studies Department. The AAC and BPC have reviewed the proposal and found it to be both academically and fiscally sound. (C. Lam) The proposal came to the Senate in October 2020. It was sent to three sub-committees, AAC, BPC, and FAC. The

resolution is brought forward by two of the three committees. FAC had some questions which can be found in the agenda packet along with the response from the proposers. FAC is not co-sponsoring, indicating that they don't believe the proposal was complete. Senators can look at all of the materials and when it comes back to the Senate for Second Reading, any Senator can suggest any amendments to the resolution. The amendments will have to be voted on, approved by the Senate, and then it is discussed. The process of inclusive feedback at this Senate session: Guests to be placed on a speakers list, and then the floor will be opened to Senators under the customary Roberts Rules of Order. Feedback from guests and Senators go to the sub-committees for consideration in modifying the resolution. The Senate will deliberate and vote on it. The final step for the resolution is the President's approval. (A. Hegde)

Speaking from various perspectives, as an alum, black man in Kern County, adjunct lecturer, and community leader, it's critically important for students-especially minority group students- to have a strong sense of belonging to persist in getting a degree. The value proposition is telling the stories of our diversity at CSUB and to be part it. (T. Matthews)

As CSUB Director of University Outreach, support of an ES department comes from being a product of Ethnic Studies, BA Pan-African Studies at CSUN. There's no way to express the impact of the program. Countless number of classmates have impacted society, some in high level positions in education, television, and the recording industry. The establishment of such a program would have a positive impact on students' lives and society. (D. Riggins)

2020-2022 CSU Student Trustee, K. Raynes decided to take the First Year Seminar (FYS) class taught by T. Salisbury. While Filipino history and experience was not part of the course, it would only be available under an ES program. Logistically, we need a department to support the entirety of first-time freshman taking the General Studies ES requirement. (K. Raynes)

Acknowledging the amazing commentary made by student and mentee, K. Raynes, the ES program was created by students, dedicated to community service. The community support is evidenced by the number of campus and outside community attending this Senate meeting. There is representation from the California Faculty Association (CFA), ASI,

Black Student Union, African Student Association, Students for Quality Education, the President's African American Council, and support from CSUs. We are at the crossroads how CSUB will be represented in the state. We are an inclusive and diverse space. It's a golden opportunity for CSUB as we move into the future with President Zelezny's Strategic Plan. (T. Salisbury) D. Knepp was hired to get ES on campus. It's important that some of FAC's points, namely RTP processes and joint appointment faculty, need clarification. Define how they would function. There are other faculty who could serve to strengthen and develop the future department. (D. Knepp) C. Catota is a proud product of the ES departments: African American Studies at UCLA and Latino American Studies at CSULA. CSUB received letters on behalf of the CSUB Latina/o Advisory Council and from the CSUB African American Advisory Council. She read the letter of support from Latino Advisory Council. A copy is attached to the minutes. (C. Catota) ES courses are where black students can learn about their history and begin to claim their identity and be proud of it. Then, they become better contributors to the university, their personal life, and overall society. As a CSUB staff member and mother of two children attending universities, she supports an ES department as a place where students of all cultures can learn, grow and mature. (R. Dean) Speakers were thanked for attending and sharing their thoughts. Senators were invited to speak. (A. Hegde) The creation of an ES department is crucial for campus, its students, and it would be a reflection of our community. Having courses is not enough. An ES department would support faculty and ultimately our students. It's the next step of AB 1460 implementation. ASI President Magaña read the ASI Resolution, SB 105 Support for Creating an Ethnic Studies Department at CSUB, unanimously passed by their board. A copy is included in the minutes. She urged the Academic Senate to support the creation of an ES department. (S. Magaña) The Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) is in favor of the development of an ES Department. FAC wasn't listed in the resolution because the committee had one last issue they were dealing with the proposers. Chair Hegde requested that we don't delay the department further while also working through this last issue. It's a way to expedite the process without ignoring things. FAC's job is to deal with issues before the

department commences, to set the department up for stability for success for representation on the campus so they can have meaningful voice, influence university processes, and meet their unit obligations. FAC is looking at university policies and what the department needs in order to function and operate successfully. We aren't saying that ES is not worthy. We say it is worthy of being set up for success. The department proposers have been receptive and responsive to FAC's suggestions and recommendations. The remaining issue is to identify three tenured faculty from among current programs to meet requirements for search committees, performance review committees and other department and unit obligations and their representation on university wide committees requiring tenured faculty so ES will have a voice. There is precedent with joint appointments in other departments. FAC was excited to learn they have set up an advisory council, selecting faculty that they feel would honor the voices of the founding members so they can perform performance reviews, run search committees and other department obligations. The proposers could meet this requirement before the next Senate meeting, December 2. FAC is completely in support of ES and would like the above to be addressed before department formation so we could be ahead of the issue. Otherwise, we would suggest this condition be added in the Second Reading. (M. Rees) This is a time for discussion and feedback to the committees. If there is to be a debate, it will be in the Second Reading. (A. Hegde) Senator Kraybill expressed her enthusiastic support for an ES department. Having served on the Senate last year and this year and seen the various outlines that both the core ES members have presented, it is time to move forward. FAC makes good point. There are several of us who have sat on performance reviews for ES faculty, and they are doing well. We also sit on RTP committees for existing departments who have very low tenure density. Speaking on behalf of constituent, T. Salisbury, the ES faculty has provided highly detailed responses to FAC's concerns; There is no directive that requires senior faculty to form a department. (J. Kraybill) Senator Lauer supports the idea to improve ES and to discuss the matter, but we also need to live it. She encourages all to think about having a faculty café where there could be mingling to talk about all kinds of

issues. Most of the faculty and Senators who have spoken on these issues she's never met and would love to talk to them. There would be much more inclusion, actively living it, if faculty could meet after classes. (A. Lauer) Speaking to the process, the sub-committees look at the issues from different perspective. AAC supports the resolution from an academic perspective. BPC looked at it from a budgetary perspective. FAC brought up some other issues. There is broad support for an ES department. What will potentially come to us are some implementation details, not the concept of having an ES department. (J. Tarjan) Senator Street gave highly positive recognition to M. Rees and R. Gearhart's work last year. It was a year of great meetings at the sub-committee level and many joint committee meetings. If there are any outstanding components related to FAC, he asked that they become integrated. For the Senate as a whole, it's time to move forward on this with a vote for approval. (B. Street) Senator Gearhart chaired AAC 2020-2022. (A. Hegde) Senator Moraga acknowledge today's speakers. It's a testament to what ES brings to CSUB. He has dual role as Senator and one the authors of the proposal. There is a long history of Ethnic Studies at CSUB since 1971. Minors in African American Studies, Latin American Studies, Mexican American Studies, and Asian American Studies got lost in the conversion from quarter to semester calendar. The passage of RES 212207 will offer honest pedagogy and cultural relevancy to our community. There are many faculty on board with teaching and mentoring junior faculty. The issue is whether ES is meeting the proposal for what it's stated to offer where it's factually based or whether it requires non ethnic studies faculty to be a part of it. His belief is that ES is an inclusive discipline. It's an opportunity to bring in more faculty, but be clear about what we are bringing those folks to do. The hope is that the issues, while important issues, don't prevent passage of the resolution. (J. Moraga) There is no question that it's urgent that an ES department is formed. Many have spoken on the importance to students and the community. There is appreciation for multiple discussions. As one of the architects of the ES proposal, A. Rodriguez is eager to have this go forward. We want to make sure the department is launched on a stable foundation to give it power and stability and representation on campus. (A. Rodriguez)

Recognize that we have the support of President Zelezny and many individuals who can assist in moving things forward. Put your words and actions into making the ES Department happen. (E. Correa) The next Senate meeting is December 2. In between there is a sub-committee meeting to discuss the feedback brought forth, today. Between that time, any Senator can suggest an amendment to the First Reading of RES 212207 Formation of an Ethnic Studies Department. Understand that we want good stable ground to stand on. If the resolution passes, its advice recommends to the President to establish an ES Department, working with the Provost. Once the department is established, it's up to the Dean, the Department, and the Provost. Any issues are up to the AVP Faculty Affairs and up. It's not the Senate's business. A. Hegde reminded the body that there isn't a perfect department. That shouldn't prevent us from moving forward. Any changes that need to be made to the resolution will be brought to the Senate, December 2. As Senate Chair, A. Hegde thanked all the members of the sub-committees last year and this year, especially the chairs of the sub-committees for all their collaborative work and thoughtful feedback. (A. Hegde)

Open Forum Items

Topic: Tenure density – It gained increasing attention during B. Street's work in BPC. Tenure density is in our Strategic plan, however year-over-year it drops and drops. He is looking for, and thinks campus should, put increasing tenure density as a priority. CSUB has special students, in all the right ways. We're in a position now, with a record trend of increased student enrollment, to put the money where it should be. The Senate and General Faculty need to push forward with this. The tenure density trend is down 13-15% this decade. We need a strategic investment in tenured faculty. It's going to help students' learning, retention, and graduation. It helps support a balanced faculty workload where increased enrollment has not been met with increases in tenured faculty. While lecturers are doing more than ever, their greater numbers put a burden on tenured faculty workload. While he loves the other campus divisions, we are an educational institution. If we don't have the sections, we don't have the classes, if we don't have the faculty, we are not the university we came for. It's faculty's job to push.

Faculty are the foundation of the university. It's faculty's job and role to carry out in a manner that we see fit. Tenure density is the best way we can serve our community, campus and students. It needs to be the #1 priority on campus. Academic Affairs has been getting the same amount every year when clearly, it's not enough. We have to start dipping into other divisions to serve our campus better. (B. Street) The Senate passed RES 181913 CSUB Tenure Density, and we will continue to work on it. (A. Hegde)

Topic: Adequate faculty to cover sections – Course sections that are already in the schedule will have to be cancelled because we don't have enough qualified faculty to teach courses. Not having enough qualified faculty is an annual issue. As a department chair, J. Tarjan feels it acutely. Some core courses have more than 50 students. It's not a long-term solution to keep increasing class sizes. Eventually, if we're going to be able to retain students through quality education, we need to provide more qualified faculty and a smaller class size experience. (J. Tarjan)

Topic: Water Restriction – The City allows watering on Tuesdays and Saturdays. There is \$100 per day violation. (A. Lauer) In 2015, CSUB spoke with the City of Bakersfield and received an exemption. The Facilities Department will go back to the City to see if there are any additional rules the campus has to follow. (F. Gorham)

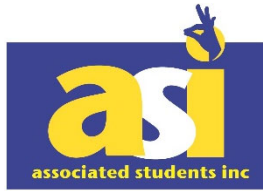
Topic: National Nurse Practitioners Week – November 7-13, Honoring the Nurse Practitioners everywhere for everything they do. (H. He) Thank you to H. He and the nursing instructors for all they do. (A. Hegde)

Topic: Hunger and Homeless week is November 15-21. Please give to the Food Pantry if you can. (A. Hegde)

Topic: CFA donating \$1 to the Food Pantry for every signature they receive on their petition. (D. Gove) Food Pantry organizers and advocates were invited to the General Faculty Meeting in August. Student Trustee K. Raynes spoke from her experience as a food insecure student at CSUB and how difficult it would have been without the benefit of the Food Pantry. They serve a few hundred students a week. (A. Hegde)

10. Adjournment

A. Hegde thanked the guests and speakers. The meeting adjourned at 11:25.



Associated Students, Incorporated
California State University, Bakersfield
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Bakersfield, CA 93301-1002
(661) 654-3487
asi-president@csub.edu

SB 105
Support for creating an Ethnic Studies Department at CSUB

- WHEREAS:** The Associated Students, Incorporated (ASI) of California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB) is the official representative body, and the voice of CSUB's more than 11,000 students and is entrusted to represent the best interests of their constituencies; AND
- WHEREAS:** ASI is committed ensuring students have an equal opportunity to succeed at their education by fostering inclusive campus environments; AND
- WHEREAS:** On February 28, 2020, ASI unanimously passed SB 203 supporting AB 1460 and called on Governor Gavin Newsom to sign the legislation. On, August 17, 2020 Governor Newsom signed AB 1460 into law; AND
- WHEREAS:** AB-1460 requires the California State University to provide for courses in ethnic studies at each of its campuses and require, as an undergraduate graduation requirement, the completion of, at minimum, one 3-unit course in ethnic studies, as specified¹; AND
- WHEREAS:** Currently, CSUB has an Ethnic Studies concentration housed in Interdisciplinary Studies with two faculty members which will not be adequate to teach all the courses necessary to fulfill AB 1460; AND
- WHEREAS:** According to the proposal for creating an Ethnic Studies Department, there "will be an urgent need to offer an adequate number of sections of approved Ethnic Studies courses to meet student demand, which will allow our students to graduate in a timely manner and help CSUB meet its graduation targets."²; AND
- WHEREAS:** This increased need for courses would require as many as 34 sections of introductory required Ethnic Studies courses each year in order to meet the requirement; AND
- WHEREAS:** "An Ethnic Studies Department will serve as a place to educate students and as a center for frank discussions that will promote positive social

¹AB 1460 California State University: graduation requirement: ethnic studies.
<https://openstates.org/ca/bills/20192020/AB1460/>

² CSUB Ethnic Studies Proposal

change in our region. Exposure to the discipline's teachings and explorations of systemic racism and discrimination, as well as its emphasis on activism, will help shine the harsh light of reality on the shortcomings and problems not only affecting the nation, but on those affecting our community.”³; AND

WHEREAS: The new Ethnic Studies Department would allow CSUB to offer a Bachelor's of Arts degree in Ethnic Studies with three tracks – Black Studies, General, and Latinx Studies which would benefit students' academic opportunities; AND

WHEREAS: “Given the new CSU and State of California Ethnic Studies mandates, CSUB's central role in promoting the expansion of Ethnic Studies, as represented by President Horace Mitchell's service on the Ethnic Studies Task Force, and the stage set by the “Crossing Borders,” grant, now is the time for CSUB to honor its commitment to our students, the faculty who will teach the new Ethnic Studies courses, and the community that the university serves by creating an Ethnic Studies Department”⁴; THEREFORE LET IT BE

RESOLVED: ASI supports elevating the Ethnic Studies concentration in Interdisciplinary Studies into an Ethnic Studies Department at CSUB in order to facilitate the implementation of AB 1460 and provide support to the faculty members who will be hired to teach the courses; LET IT BE FUTHER

RESOLVED: ASI urges the Academic Senate to support the proposal brought forward by the Ethnic Studies faculty which seeks to elevate the Ethnic Studies concentration in Interdisciplinary Studies into an Ethnic Studies Department at CSUB; LET IT BE FUTHER

RESOLVED: Copies of this resolution will be distributed widely, including, but not limited to, CSUB President Dr. Lynnette Zelezny, CSUB Provost Vernon Harper, CSUB Academic Senate Chair Dr. Aaron Hegde, Dr. Alicia Rodriguez, Dr. Jorge Moraga, and Dr. Tracey Salisbury.

Passed unanimously by the ASI Board of Directors on Friday, November 20, 2020

Vanessa Chicaiza
ASI President 2020-2021

³ CSUB Ethnic Studies Proposal

⁴ CSUB Ethnic Studies Proposal

October 28, 2021

TO: Dr. Aaron Hegde, Chair of Academic Senate

FROM: CSUB African American Advisory Council

RE: African American Advisory Council's Support for a CSUB Department of Ethnic Studies

As the community and campus members of the African American Advisory Council created by President Lynnette Zelezny, we submit this letter to the California State University, Bakersfield's Academic Senate in support of the establishment of an Ethnic Studies Department at CSUB.

Established by President Zelezny in 2018, CSUB's African American Advisory Council is composed of representatives from local government agencies, faith leaders, nonprofits, civic and business organizations, as well as members of the campus community. The council was established for the purposes of having the university administration, faculty, and staff collaborate with local leaders of the community to devise approaches to better serve our region and our students. Key goals of the African American Advisory Council are to provide guidance and resources to help ensure that CSUB's graduates are well-prepared to compete in a diverse workplace and equipped not only to thrive in their professions and the communities in which they live, but to develop the skills needed to prepare them for leadership roles. With these goals in mind, this diverse group of voices helps ensure that mutually beneficial professional connections are being made between campus representatives, especially our Black students, and stakeholders in Bakersfield, Kern County, and in our broader service region.

The proposed department will provide ETHS faculty with the institutional support and resources they need to better serve our Black students and provide them with an education rooted in the purposeful origins and premise of Ethnic Studies. While this initial proposal remains under deliberation by the Academic Senate's subcommittees, we would like to voice our intentional advocacy and enduring support for the creation of this department in the strongest possible terms.

Given the racial reckoning that the United States continues to face in the aftermath of the summer of 2020, the African American Advisory Council considers it vital that Kern County's premier and only publicly supported university house an academic department that is responsible for educating and graduating culturally competent leaders. There are shockingly few courses offered that reflect the stories and realities of African Americans in the U.S. Most of the stories that are shared speak to Black pain, adversity, and struggle. More stories of triumph need to be told. Not only would this strengthen the development and persistence of African American leaders who dream of hearing stories of people who look like them, but it would also enrich the

perspective and understanding of majority-group students who have not learned much about Black stories of success.

This is an effectiveness issue. The 2020 United States Census data predicts that by 2045 this nation will no longer have a White/Caucasian majority; the country will consist mostly of people who are nonwhite. As the country undergoes this demographic shift, there is urgency in ensuring that college and university graduates are aware of and can think critically about the role of race and ethnicity in our various social and institutional systems, such as our financial, political, and educational systems, to name a few. The National Student Clearinghouse Research Center reported a drop in Black student enrollment of 19% over the last two decades. California State University has also seen a precipitous decline, and enrollment numbers for CSUB have corresponded to the negative national and statewide trends. The Education Trust also reports that Black student enrollment has declined in the same period at more than 60% of colleges and universities nationally. While numerous factors contribute to lower enrollment, a sense of belonging and the reputation of an institution certainly contribute to attraction. Over the last year, Black students at CSUB have vocalized their support for Ethnic Studies courses and articulated specific incidents of perceived marginalization. Black students are not experiencing the same positive culture as other students. They don't feel as welcome. The national and statewide data coupled with anecdotal stories from CSUB students affirm a simple solution: more Black stories must be intentionally taught and celebrated for African American students to feel a stronger sense of belonging at CSUB. It would likely strengthen enrollment.

This is also a values issue. Sharing the stories and diverse perspectives of multiple ethnic groups, especially minority groups, is simply the right thing to do. The university has a mandate to include all student groups, even those who represent the minority. The inspirational motto "Runners on the Rise" must apply to all students, including Black students, or the elevated language rings hollow. As professionals dedicated to improving our community and steering it toward a better future, we consider it to be of utmost importance and urgency that future generations of African Americans are prepared to take on the myriad of challenges that lay ahead, and can exercise with expert knowledge and informed judgement, the kinds of unbiased decision-making that will be required in leading, serving, and governing a diverse community. This was part of Martin Luther King Jr.'s lofty dream. CSUB speaks to this aspiration on their website with these noble words, "The university strives to be a model for supporting and educating students to become knowledgeable, engaged, innovative and ethical leaders in the regional and global community." We agree with that statement and CSUB's aspirational values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Now is the time to live those values in real terms for Black students.

Kern County is the epicenter of a rich, dynamic, and inspiring local history in which anti-racism and labor activists have courageously fought against discrimination and injustices. We are Black, and we live here too. It is therefore imperative that the Bakersfield campus of the California State University system ensure that our region's collective experiences and contributions to African American society and culture

remain an integral part of our students' intellectual and socio-cultural development. Every day in Kern County and around the nation, Black students, parents, faith leaders, business professionals, and community advocates overcome adversity to achieve success in America. To combat the lingering effects of systemic inequities across multiple social sectors – those stories must be told in university classrooms. For this region to realize the promise and opportunities of our Black students and future leaders, these stories must be told in CSUB classrooms.

Ethnic Studies is a necessary pathway to ensure that all students receive a quality education rooted in critical thinking, intercultural learning, and anti-racist, liberatory pedagogy. Failure to offer courses that provide this enriching diversity of perspective constitutes a disservice to white and nonwhite students alike. In the aftermath of George Floyd, a Black man, colleges and universities across the nation asked what they could do better to support Black students attending their institutions of learning. This is one clear response that would be embraced by the African American students and faculty at CSUB and local community leaders. In our opinion, there should remain no further barriers to moving forward. We have the ability to make it so – we must now demonstrate the courage to be inclusive and socially just.

Thus, we strongly urge you and your colleagues to support the creation of an Ethnic Studies Department, which will better serve CSUB's students and its alums, and help make them unbiased leaders in a rapidly changing country and world.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,

Representatives of the African American Advisory Council
(Names below)

Traco P. Matthews

Chief Program Officer, CAPK
CSUB African American Advisory Council

Arleana Waller

Founder MLKcommUNITY / ShePower
CSUB African American Advisory Council

Dr. Rhonda E. Dunga, Ph.D

Associate Professor of Sociology, CSUB

Dr. Tracey M. Salisbury

Assistant Professor, Interdisciplinary Studies, CSUB

Jessica R. Grimes, Ph.D

Dean of Economic & Workforce Development, KCCD

Patricia Lane

Coordinator for Black Educator Teacher Residency Program

Uchechi Okey-Dike

President, Hawk Honors Program

Ora Frink

Black Community Member

Shameka Morris

Black Community Member

Michael Bowers

Planning Commissioner, City of Bakersfield

Vice President of Public & Government Affairs, Centric Health

NaTasha Johnson

President, Upside Productions Management

Keith Wolaridge

Trustee, Panama Buena Vista Union School District

Dr. Julian West

Director of Student Success, Porterville College