



ACADEMIC SENATE

The primary voice of the faculty in academic and professional matters at Santa Rosa Junior College.

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: July 22, 2020

TIME: 3:15 p.m.

LOCATION: Zoom only

ZOOM ID: 739 337 730

<https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/739337730>

PRESENT

L. Aspinall, M. Bojanowski, J. Carlin-Goldberg, C. Crawford, A. Donegan, T. Ehret, J. Fassler, N. Frantz, T. Jacobson, D. Lemmer, S. Martin, L. Nahas, G. Navarro, M. Ohkubo, A. Oliver, R. Romagnoli, S. Rosen, G. Sellu, M. Starkey, J. Stover, J. Thompson, K. Valenzuela, K. Wegman, N. Wheeler, S. Whyly, S. Winston

ABSENT

M. Aparicio, P. Bell, T. Graziani, J. Kosten, E. Thompson

GUESTS

Members of the Black Student Union: D. Carmona-Benson, D. Kidder, A. Moore, L. Myles

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 p.m. by President J. Thompson.

OPEN FORUM

1. **B. Flyswithhawks** explained that SRJC formerly had an Ethnic Studies Department that was dismantled in 1978 due to low enrollment. Although the District wanted to dissolve the curriculum attached to the department as well, Behavioral Sciences Department Chair, Dianne Smith, fought to keep the curriculum in place by incorporating all the Ethnic Studies courses into the Anthropology, Psychology, and Sociology curriculum. Since then, the following ethnic majors have been created: Native American Studies, Latin American Studies, Chicano and Latino Studies and Social Justice Studies. B. Flyswithhawks recommended the development of an Ethnic Studies Department Task Force and stated the need for clear criteria for selecting participants; inclusive and diverse participation including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) faculty members and relevant disciplinary background; a clear charge for the task force; the importance of listening and considering all possibilities; the need for a timeline, timely reports, and a final recommendation to the Senate; the need to research existing existing California Ethnic Studies Programs, consult with current BIPOC faculty and students, and collaborate with Academic Affairs; and the importance of committing to work respectfully, nonjudgmentally, and with kindness and appreciation for difference in opinion. [Read B. Flyswithhawks's full statement here.](#)
2. **L. Larqué** commended her Black brothers and sisters for their courage in bringing into the open the systemic racism in this country and institution; reminded attendees that the College had an Ethnic Studies Program in the past and already has a "shell" for the Ethnic Studies Department; that SRJC already has several Ethnic Studies programs, including

Latinx and Chicanx Studies, Latin American Studies, Native American Studies, Social Justice Studies, and Behavioral and Social Sciences Studies. She stresses the need to develop an Ethnic Studies Department that would be led, organized, and taught by BIPOC, who, as people of color, have the experience with culture, Ethnic Studies program development, and teaching classes pertinent to Ethnic Studies. She requested that White brothers and sisters move aside and allow them to do this work. [Read L. Larqué's full statement.](#)

3. **A. Morrison** provided a summary of the origins and background of the discipline of Ethnic Studies, which emerged in the Bay Area in 1968 as a result of the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) strike at San Francisco State University, led by the Black Student Union (BSU) in coalition with other groups representing Native American, Latinx, and Asian students. In 1969 the TWLF strike spread to UC Berkeley; students' demands included increased access to higher education for students of color; increased hiring of faculty of color; and the establishment of Black Studies and Ethnic Studies programs and departments. A. Morrison explained that Ethnic Studies is the only academic field explicitly focused on race relations and ethnic identity in the U.S. from a humanistic, social-scientific, and social-justice point of view. The discipline includes history of racial subjugation and white supremacy and provides the tools to analyze, challenge, and dismantle racism; it incorporates insights from other fields and foregrounds the voices of communities of color; its scholarship is produced primarily by scholars of color, and Ethnic Studies classes are usually taught by scholars of color. [Read A. Morrison's full statement.](#)
4. **M. Ohkubo** noted that as there is a senator vacancy in Area 10, there is an opportunity to increase the representation of people of color on the Senate, which still remains limited in this respect.
5. **R. DasGupta** read a statement on behalf of tenured women faculty of color, including L. Servais, B. Flyswithawks, L. Kuwabara, L. Larqué, T. Sakanashi, and J. Thao. The statement addressed the request and long wait for Ethnic Studies and acknowledged the hard work, stories, persistence, and willingness to "speak truth to power" to invite the District to resurrect the program; acknowledged that Ethnic Studies offers sanctuary from "the stifling white supremacy of our nation and institutions of higher education." R. DasGupta stated that Ethnic Studies Programs across the nation are the result of hard-fought battles by Black, Indigenous and People of Color; that being at SRJC as the College resurrects Ethnic Studies is for many of people a dream finally being realized; that Black, Indigenous and People of Color should lead the efforts to develop the College's Ethnic Studies program; the importance of BIPOC faculty at SRJC with academic expertise, curriculum development experience and cultural knowledge joining in developing this program; that our white colleagues use their white privilege to support those without it; that white colleagues "do [their] work to address [their] white privilege," "not make this moment and movement about [them]," and support BIPOC faculty members in building Ethnic Studies; and that the College not repeat its history of creating an Ethnic Studies program only to dismantle it. [Read R. DasGupta's full statement.](#)
6. **D. Lemmer** stated that Black Lives Matter; that he has been married to a Choctaw woman for 36 years and has learned a lot about Indigenous struggles in this country; that being married to a Choctaw woman means that he and his children are Choctaw, as the Choctaw tradition is traditionally a matriarchal society. D. Lemmer described the phenomenon of

“social-exia,” which is that none of us can see the privileges that accrue to us by virtue of our station in life and that we see only the privileges of those above us in the social order; and recognized that as a white man, he has had “every privilege that probably can be had in this country.” He stated that our society has been based upon genocide, the theft of resources, and forced labor; that a lot of those structures are intact in our economy; and that if we are to change anything regarding race relations, regarding the subjugation of one people by another people, Ethnic Studies must be a general-education requirement of all people attending the J.C.

MINUTES

The May 20, 2020, minutes were adopted without objection.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None

REPORTS

1. **President’s Report** – J. Thompson welcomed new hire Amanda Hopkins, the new Administrative Assistant to the Academic Senate. J. Thompson also reported that:
 - At the July 14 Board meeting she shared the Senate’s ideas, expressed during discussion at the June 11 Special Meeting, for concrete responses to the Black Student Union demands; noted that it is important the Board, Administration, and college community know that the Senate is responding to the calls for change, specifically on items within the Senate’s purview: no. 1, curriculum; no. 2, degree requirements; no. 4, academic program development; no. 5, standards or policies regarding student [...] success; no. 8, faculty professional development; and no. 10, advising on processes for budget development. There will be Senate discussions and decisions, and Senate Exec will ask people to step forward to do the work that will benefit our Black and African American students and respond to the BSU demands.
 - The Senate Executive Committee will be partnering with AFA on a PDA Day workshop on 10 + 1, scope of representation, and the overlap between these two, and asked senators to please consider attending.
 - The Guided Pathways Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is on the July 23 negotiations agenda and that as the negotiations teams, are currently completing the side letters in response to the Coronavirus and transitioning to remote modalities, they are now able to take up the GP MOU. And
 - The agenda for the Senate Retreat, scheduled for Friday, August 28, will include Robert’s Rules, parliamentary procedure, the Senate’s meeting calendar, and structure. Senators may email J. Thompson suggested agenda items.

J. Thompson concluded her report by stating that if the Senate is to do its best work for students and the College, Senate members will need to take good care of each other while rolling up our sleeves. [Read the full President’s report.](#)

CONSENT

1. Senate Vacancy.

Per Article V, Section 1 of the the Constitution, initiate the election process to fill the remaining year of the term for Area 10; and request interested Senators to forward their names to the Senate Executive Committee, to be considered for appointment to the Senate's Elections Committee.

The Senate expressed its desire to move this item to the August 19, 2020, agenda, and to determine whether Senate rules allow for prioritizing the election of a person of color to the vacancy in Area 10.

ACTION

1. Creation of a Black/Ethnic Studies Program at SRJC

Shall the Academic Senate endorse creation of a Black/Ethnic Studies program at SRJC and, to that end, partner with the Vice President of Academic Affairs in creating an ad-hoc faculty task force that will recommend the curricular content and requirements of such a program?

The Discussion item, as stated above, having been identified as urgent, was unanimously voted to move from Discussion to Action following a motion by J. Carlin-Goldberg and a second by D. Lemmer.

The Senate engaged in further discussion, as follows:

The process should be led by faculty and include local experts in addition to the faculty; not losing sight of the distinctions between Black Studies and Ethnic Studies, that they are not the same disciplines, that Ethnic Studies is an umbrella discipline that includes Black Studies; and that both are needed.

J. Stover made a motion that the Senate endorse the original language as presented in the Discussion section of the agenda and work from there. D. Lemmer seconded.

F. Chong asked about the phrasing of the motion, specifically whether it included partnering with the Vice President for Academic Affairs in creating an ad hoc faculty task force.

The question of broader participation, including students, was also raised, which it was noted could be addressed in a friendly amendment or entrusted to the task force, which could invite students and others to participate. It was noted that a friendly amendment would give confidence to students who are advocating for a Black Studies and an Ethnic Studies program. J. Carlin-Goldberg made a friendly amendment to specify that faculty, staff, and students also be included in the task force. The amendment was seconded by A. Donegan. The vote on the amendment to the motion—that the motion specify the inclusion of faculty, staff, and students—passed without objection.

Additional points and questions included the order in which a task force would engage the work, beginning with the development of a Black Studies major and then an Ethnic Studies major; partnering with the Vice President of Academic Affairs in creating the ad hoc task force; and the creation of departments, which it was noted are not in the Senate's purview but are rather the role of the Administration. Further discussion focused on efforts to integrate the senators' and guests' evolving consensus to endorse the development of both a Black Studies major and an Ethnic Studies major and/or program; to begin with the Black Studies major; that the language describing the task force to clearly call for inclusiveness; and that the Senate to partner with the VPAA in forming the task force.

Language was suggested, asking whether the Academic Senate should endorse the creation of a Black Studies (first) and Ethnic Studies program (next) at SRJC and, to that

end; partner with the Vice President of Academic Affairs in creating an ad-hoc task force of faculty, students, and staff that will recommend the curricular content and requirements of such a program? There was no formal motion for this.

It was noted that J. Bush had presented in the “chat” feature of Zoom language attempting to capture the evolving agreements regarding starting with Black Studies and then Ethnic Studies; having an inclusive task force; and partnering with the VPAA in the creation of the task force. There was acknowledgment and discussion of the following language: *Shall the Academic Senate endorse creation of a Black Studies major as the first and most urgent component of an Ethnic Studies program at SRJC and, to that end, partner with the Vice President of Academic Affairs in creating an ad-hoc task force of faculty, students and staff and experts that will recommend the curricular content and requirements of such a program?* A vote was called, and there were no objections; however, the record shows that there was no formal motion for this language.

LISTENING SESSION, QUESTION-AND-ANSWER

1. Members of the Black Student Union present to the Academic Senate regarding their vision for their student experience at SRJC and will respond to questions from Senators.

D. Kidder, the Vice President of the Black Student Union, asked whether the Academic Senate intended to begin right away on an item of benefit to the Black Student Union and whether there was movement on the list of BSU demands.

J. Thompson clarified that the day’s agenda had a single Discussion item, which is the creation of the Black/Ethnic studies program, which is within Senate purview, and her hope that the Senate discussion would be informed by the public comments contributions from BSU students.

D. Carmona-Benson stated that students of color would get crucial critical thinking education from an Ethnic Studies program; that an Ethnic Studies program would help them advance in their community and careers and help them develop self-esteem and to be represented at the College; that it is important that teachers who are teaching these classes are culturally competent; that Black programs were not included in the Ethnic Studies programs currently housed in Behavioral Sciences; that people of color and white students have been misled educationally for too long; that Black Studies and Ethnic Studies will benefit Black students as well as White students, who need to learn their place in history as oppressors and also as activists. D. Carmona-Benson stated that it is important to know the history of one’s culture and heritage and that existing courses must convey more accurate information and be more inclusive; she also challenged celebrating Columbus, or Thanksgiving instead of Indigenous People’s Day.

D. Kidder noted the importance of having African American and Black history classes and also that these classes be taught by Black professors.

A. Moore noted the importance of his experience of studying with an African American Professor; of being able to work as a teaching assistant for a sociology professor and feel the experience of faculty members; and making Ethnic Studies or Black Studies a requirement.

L. Myles described her experience in the Communications Studies Department and that, except for a Journalism course, there were no women instructors and no women of color; that SRJC lacks a richness, which is important to filmmaking students, due to not having an

African American Studies Department or a Native American Studies Department; and that there is a need at SRJC for instructors who will help manifest students' vision of a world where people like her are represented in film.

Faculty member L. Larquè noted that the College does not have a Black Studies program and that the murder of yet another Black man has inspired students to take courage and face the systemic racism that all people of color have been living under, but especially Black people; she also stated the importance of not pushing one group and leaving behind other groups and that white privilege has separated people, in favor of one group.

Faculty member B. Flyswithawks spoke to the students regarding having someone who looks like them teaching their classes, and that "there are no words in any language that can justify why we are at this time in our history, in a place of higher education, and still not having faculty of color representing the ethnic group from which our students are taking specifically ethnic classes."

Faculty member B. Reaves stated that George Floyd was a gentlemen who had a system on his neck; the importance of supporting the students and their effort to speak today; the need to center this conversation around Blackness instead of hiding behind equity and diversity; and the need to embed Blackness and other cultures in Math, Sociology, etc.

Faculty member M. Hale added that it is also important to center anti blackness and its role within institutions, and to design policies that don't contain anti blackness at their core. He noted the students' courage in speaking with the Academic Senate; the importance of sharing the BSU demands with various shared governance bodies which are responsible for specific policies; and the importance of the students' involvement, providing mentoring for them, and helping them to learn the processes involved in the College's response to their demands.

D. Carmona-Benson described the isolating experience of being a student of color on a predominantly white campus and of professors who are not culturally competent.

Senators noted past obstructionism in the Senate around equity; the hope that the Senate would not squander the current opportunity; the vast array of micro aggressions, described by D. Carmona-Benson, and that are the daily experience of SRJC students; that Black Studies should be the first priority in the Ethnic Studies discussion; and called for prioritizing the hiring of Black faculty members and as a cohort so that they have a community.

Faculty member L. Contreras stated that students of color experience cultural incompetence from their teachers throughout K-12—for example, being pressured to anglicize their names—and further noted the importance diversifying syllabi and diversifying who we are reading in the classroom and our understanding of what intellectual thought is significant is important to address; being positive and welcoming and creating a mentoring environment.

Senators further noted the importance of pushing these tasks through, centering Blackness in all curriculum, addressing how the White history taught throughout K-12 and many colleges perpetuates systemic racism.

F. Chong thanked the Black Student Union for facilitating this conversation; urged the Senate to support creation of an Ethnic Studies major; noted the importance of Ethnic Studies to his own education and understanding of self; expressed a commitment to

change and to working with the Black Student Union; and expressed appreciation for including administrative ideas.

B. Flyswithhawks noted that the California State University has just this year required an Ethnic Studies course of all their graduates and also that it creating an Ethnic Studies program at the College must meet the standards of the Chancellor's Office and the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges.

DISCUSSION

1. Urgent:* Creation of a Black/Ethnic Studies Program at SRJC

Shall the Academic Senate endorse creation of a Black/Ethnic Studies program at SRJC and, to that end, partner with the Vice President of Academic Affairs in creating an ad-hoc faculty task force that will recommend the curricular content and requirements of such a program?

The Discussion item was introduced in terms of the immediate question of endorsing the creation of these programs and that curriculum work would be done in a subsequent phase.

J. Carlin-Goldberg moved that Discussion item of the creation of a Black/Ethnic Studies program at SRJC be moved to an Action item. D. Lemmer seconded the motion.

INFORMATION

None

ADJOURNMENT

5:30 p.m.