

Department of Ethnic Studies 2010-11 Annual Report

prepared by
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Introduction

The Department of Ethnic Studies at California State University East Bay offers an interdisciplinary and holistic study of the multiracial, multicultural and multi-gender indigenous and immigrant societies of the United States. Its mission is central to the university's commitment to "educational excellence for a diverse society." The department's pedagogy integrates paradigms from the social sciences and humanities and has helped students qualify for graduate and professional schools as well as diverse public and private sector employment.

The Department of Ethnic Studies features 6 full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members (Fong, Baham, Calvo, Salmon, Salmon, Singh), 1 FERP professor (Paige), and 1 entitled Lecturer appointment (Loden) -although in any given quarter, anywhere from 2 to 5 lecturer faculty may serve the department. The Department of Ethnic Studies is affiliated with the Latin American Studies program that underwent a 5-year review during the 2010-11 academic year under the leadership of Dr. Carlos Salomon. The department additionally supports an Islamic/Interfaith Studies program through a grant from the Sterling Foundation, and has supported a Pashto/Dari/Afghan Studies program through a U.S. State Dept. grant. The department offers major and minor degree options in African American Studies, Asian American Studies, Latino/a Studies, American Indian Studies, and Genders & Sexualities in Communities of Color. The department also possesses the Ranjit Sabharwal Endowed Chair of Sikh/Punjabi Studies (Singh) initiated by a \$500,000 gift from the Bay Area's Sikh community. A complete Sikh/Punjabi Studies program including language courses is currently in development.

Self Study

Since 2003, the Department of Ethnic Studies has hired 5 tenure-track professors (Baham, Calvo, Salomon, Salmon, and Singh), 3 of who have earned tenure (Baham, Calvo, Salomon) and 1 who will be evaluated for tenure during the 2011-12 academic year (Salmon). These 5 professors form the core of the future of the department of Ethnic Studies and have contributed to steadily increasing growth in major/minor programs and FTES. In recent years the department has absorbed the retirement of African American Studies Professor Noel Samaroo and the FERP of former chair and African American Studies professor Barbara Paige. The loss of two faculty in African American Studies in recent years will necessitate another appointment.

The Department of Ethnic Studies is in a growth mode. We are committed as a faculty to increasing the number of our majors. To this end, the Department of Ethnic Studies has crafted a three-part Ethnic Studies Growth Initiative in order to substantially increase the number of its majors within a 5 to 10-year period.

The first phase of the Ethnic Studies Growth Initiative includes the creation of an online major/minor program in its Genders & Sexualities in Communities of Color option. The program has been approved by the university president and faculty senate and is awaiting approval from WASC on September 30, 2011. The Genders & Sexualities in Communities of Color option is the first option in the CSU system dedicated to the academic study of LGBT persons of color. It offers tremendously popular courses including *ES 3430 Interracial Sex & Marriage*, a course that generally affords the department 4 to 6 sections per quarter with waiting lists of hundreds of students. The online program will offer all students throughout the CSU system an ability to earn an Ethnic Studies degree with a major option in this unique program and in the immediate future and long-term the department projects tremendous growth in majors through this online program.

The second phase of the initiative is a substantive alteration of major/minor requirements agreed upon in a faculty retreat Spring 2011. The department has agreed to streamline its Core/Area Breadth/Primary Option/Secondary Option structure into one that requires Core/Primary Option/Electives. The department intends therefore to simplify the path toward a degree in Ethnic Studies and enable students to have a greater choice of courses that they can take. Faculty have considered the impact of the previous degree structure on transfer students as well as the impact that a simplified structure will have on advising and advertising the program. Faculty have also considered the positive impact that streamlining the major will have for students in its new Genders & Sexualities in Communities of Color Online Major/Minor Program.

The third and final phase of the department's growth initiative includes the embrace of Service Learning opportunities. The department further agreed to substitute its capstone courses *ES 4020/4030 Senior Seminar/Senior Thesis* course sequence for a service learning/internship course *ES 3290 Community Development* that will offer students much needed employment experience and contacts in the non-profit employment sector. We are anticipating that our new school-to-work focus will further assist with increasing majors in the department. We are aware that as student fees increase, students are drawn to majors that can lead to employment.

In addition to the three-part Ethnic Studies Growth Initiative, the department is initiating other curricular modifications including the merger of Latino/a and Latin American Studies at the suggestion of Dean Kathleen Rountree. Professors in specific option areas have already begun discussing updating course offerings. The introduction of *Hip-Hop Nation* or *Latino/a Sexualities* for example, reflects the on-going modernization of the program. The Department has further consulted a graphic designer/marketing professional in order to modernize its branding and website. We will begin actively initiating all modifications to the curriculum and public relations ideas during the upcoming 2011/12 academic year.

Summary of Assessment

In Spring 2011 under the leadership of Dr. Luz Calvo, the Department of Ethnic Studies initiated assessment of the academic strengths of its current curriculum. We decided to assess SLO #1: "Students graduating with a B.A. in Ethnic Studies from Cal State East Bay will demonstrate an understanding of the historical and contemporary experiences of American ethnic minorities as racialized people in the United States."

The assessment tool/student questionnaire and rubric created by Dr. Calvo reads as follows:

Student Questionnaire:

1. In the field of Ethnic Studies, "racialization" is a key term. In your own words, describe the process of racialization as it pertains to people of color in the US.
2. Describe three historical events that have impacted the socio-economic standing of people of color (any or all groups) in the US. These events can have had either a positive or negative impact. Be as specific as possible in your answers.
3. Describe three contemporary issues that impact people of color in the year 2011. Choose the three issues that you think are MOST important to people of color (any or all groups). Be as specific as possible in your answers.

RUBRIC

	Developing	Competent	Advanced
#1	Answer does not clearly articulate a clear understanding of race as a socially constructed category with real effects.	Answer shows that EITHER race is socially constructed OR that it has real effects.	Answer clearly articulates that race is a socially constructed category with real effects on people's lives.
#2	Student can only identify a few obvious events (i.e. Slavery) but gives no historical detail.	Student identifies specific and important historical events but answer is not fully fleshed out.	Student identifies important historical events such as Chinese exclusion laws, Simpson Rodino Act, <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> and can accurately describe these events in context.
#3	Student cannot articulate three current issues	Student identifies three current issues that affect people of color but without much nuance or complexity.	Answer clearly articulates that race is a socially constructed category with real effects on people's lives.

Conclusions

The assessment tool was scored during our Spring 2011 faculty retreat. When we tallied the results, the average score was 6.75 out of 9. According to the rubric a score of 6 was considered “competent.” The low score was 4. The high score was 9. After reading the students’ answers to the questions, Ethnic Studies faculty had a qualitative discussion about strengths and weaknesses of students’ responses.

Key points that emerged from our discussion:

1. We need to emphasize the concept of racialization in *all* of our classes.
2. Our students need a broader understanding of racialization as it applies to multiple communities and not just one or two.
3. Many students had a solid understanding of racialization as it applies to one community.
4. We should work harder to allow students to make connections between the various oppressions faced by each racial and ethnic community.
5. We should be teaching more about legal issues and the law.
6. Overall, we were impressed by our students’ ability to connect contemporary issues to historical issues affecting communities of color.
7. Many of the students gave answers that were vague and general.
8. Writing skills need improvement.

After much discussion, faculty agreed to rethink our SLOs. The four department SLOs were written by faculty who have since retired. We are committed to writing SLOs that more accurately reflect the current state of the field and the pedagogical priorities of our present faculty. At our next faculty retreat during 2011-12 we will develop new SLOs for the department.

III. Report on Planning and Institutional Research

The Chair of the Department of Ethnic Studies currently has access to Quarterly Headcount Enrollment data from 2007 through 2011; a Fall 2011 report of enrolled majors; APR summary reports for 2005-2009; and FTES Enrollment statistics from 2005 through 2010 (Fall quarters only).

CAPR should be made aware of the dearth of statistical information and dramatic conflicts in various statistical reports which make it difficult for departments to track their growth and progress. CAPR should further be aware that the Chair of the Department of Ethnic Studies has never been in possession of a one-page report from Planning and Institutional Research. This data has not been available during the duration of my tenure as chair (2009-2011). As soon as this data is made available it can be incorporated into subsequent Ethnic Studies Annual Reports.

All statistical data at hand demonstrates a steady growth in majors in Ethnic Studies since 2007 but there are dramatic conflicts in the numbers. Available CSU ERSS Quarterly Headcount reports suggest that in Fall 2006 the Department of Ethnic Studies had 28 enrolled majors and that by Spring 2011 we had grown to 34 enrolled majors. The Fall 2011 Report indicates that we now have 37 enrolled majors. At the same time an APR Summary for 2005-2009 suggests that in 2005 we had 23 majors and that by 2009 we had 49 majors. The differences are significant, particularly for a small department whose survival in the midst of budgetary crises may be wholly dependent on the growth of enrolled majors. There is a 22% difference alone between 48 and 37 majors.

FTES reports demonstrate similar growth. In Fall 2005 Ethnic Studies had an FTES of 144.0 and in Fall 2010 we had an FTES of 189.1. These numbers are comparable with the Department of Criminal Justice (180.5 FTES Fall 2010) and Political Science (185.1 FTES Fall 2010) to mention a few and exceed PUAD, PHIL, MUS, GEOG, and ANTH. In other words, FTES statistics for the Department of Ethnic Studies represent an average CLASS figure.

Data for Fall 2011 indicates an actual SCU of 3088 (as of Sept. 15, 2011). With 22 classes offered during the Fall 2011 quarter, the SCU figure of 3088 represents approximately 772 students across 22 classes, meaning that the Department of Ethnic Studies teaches an average of 35.09 students per class. In light of the Chancellor's Spring 2011 SFR target of 31, courses must average 40 full-time enrolled students in order to reach an SFR of 31. Contemporary SFR targets of 35 suggest that courses for Fall 2011 and forward must meet an average of 43-45 full-time enrolled students. At an average of 35.09, the Department of Ethnic Studies in Fall 2011 falls a little short of the 40 – 45 student per class average, although a majority of our courses have waitlists and at least one of our courses has a current enrollment of 50 students (Fall 2011 ES 1201).

To this end the department of Ethnic Studies will take into consideration all implications of the contemporary escalation of SFR targets including the development of mega-sections or a substantive raise in course caps throughout the curriculum. It should be noted, however, that Ethnic Studies offers many courses for General Education and CAPR should be aware that the ever-moving SFR target represents a real threat to the intellectual integrity of our courses, implications for faculty workload, and General Education standards.