The SCFA enthusiastically endorses the SDFA letter below.

Dear colleagues,

The UC San Diego Faculty Association joins the UC Ethnic Studies Faculty Council in urging you to support the UC A-G ethnic studies requirement (subject requirement for admission to the UC system), which the campus has already endorsed. We share their concern about a disturbing, recent development that suggests political interference into faculty rights to develop curriculum. We believe that recent abrupt shifts in course betray student demands for an A-G ethnic studies requirement and potentially reflects irregularities in the process.

By issuing this statement of solidarity, the UC San Diego Faculty Association joins nearly 1,300 faculty, administrators, and students who have signed a statement of support for the UC A-G ethnic studies course criteria that the UC Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS)-appointed ethnic studies specialists crafted and BOARS initially approved. The list of signatories includes the National Association for Multicultural Education, the California Alliance of Researchers for Equity in Education, chapters of the Association of Raza Educators, a range of UC departments, and the 19,000-strong UAW 2865 graduate student union. It reads as a roster of major ethnic studies scholars throughout the state and beyond. It speaks volumes about the support for ethnic studies both outside and inside the UC system.
The following is a brief timeline of the issue compiled by the UC Ethnic Studies Faculty Council:

- In October 2021, **Assembly Bill 101** was signed in California, requiring that ethnic studies be offered in high school by the 2025-26 school year and become a graduation requirement by 2030. In November 2020, in response to advocacy from the UC Student Assembly, which represents 285,000 students, the UC Academic Senate and UC Board of Regents approved a resolution expanding the A-G admissions requirements to include a one-semester ethnic studies course. The UC Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) then convened a workgroup of twenty ethnic studies specialists to articulate the course criteria.

- On May 12, 2022, BOARS chair Madeleine Sorapure notified the UC-appointed members of the writing team (a subset of the larger workgroup) that developed, drafted, and revised the course criteria for the UC A-G ethnic studies requirement that the UC would instead be taking a “broader approach to include diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice courses.” The fact that BOARS blocked the members of the writing team from taking part in the May 6, 2022 BOARS meeting meant that no expert in ethnic studies was present at a consequential discussion that resulted in this reckless reversal of course.

Disturbingly, at that May 6 meeting, despite having previously approved the draft criteria, BOARS decided to allow racist external pressure—including letters and petitions against ethnic studies—to inform their deliberative process. This abrupt shift away from ethnic studies-specific course criteria to “DEI/social justice” is all the more unconscionable since BOARS unanimously already had approved an explicitly ethnic studies A-G requirement in late 2020. This new watered-down focus on “diversity, equity, and inclusion” (DEI) courses fundamentally betrays student demands for a UC A-G ethnic studies requirement. It moreover signally fails to align with California’s mandated ethnic studies high school requirement. We also point out that fringe anti-ethnic studies organizations have boasted to the media that they, through interference in the deliberative process, were “successful in stalling the ethnic studies requirement.”

Although a UC A-G ethnic studies requirement will advance UC’s diversity, equity, and inclusion goals, “DEI” is a corporate buzzword that is aimed, in top-
down fashion, at managing diversity in institutional settings. It is not, nor has it ever been, a curriculum. Unlike ethnic studies as a field that emerged from grassroots struggles to democratize education for Native peoples and communities of color who have long been sidelined in traditional curricula, DEI does not center their lived experiences, their epistemologies, and their struggles within and against systems of colonialism and racism. It is not backed by research like ethnic studies, which as a field has been empirically shown to improve the academic achievement and social relations of all students. Simply put, DEI is not a field of study.

Like other A-G requirements, the UC ethnic studies requirement—and course criteria—must be driven by scholars, teacher-practitioners, and experts within the field. In this sensitive juncture in which it appears that the A-G ethnic studies requirement itself is being reconsidered, the UC Ethnic Studies Faculty Council asks you, out of concern for equitable proceedings, to take whatever measures that you can to ensure that any campus-level and BOARS deliberations around the UC A-G ethnic studies requirement include at least one ethnic studies specialist from your campus.

We also call on Madeleine Sorapure, chair of BOARS, to ensure that in keeping with the terms of their appointment, the members of the A-G ethnic studies workgroup be allowed to help formulate any policy proposal on ethnic studies. The fact that they have repeatedly been blocked from taking part in discussions that they were charged, as content-area experts, to participate in is very troubling, to say the least.

We ask that you support the integrity of ethnic studies as a field now over a half century old by requiring coursework for incoming students that is consonant with the field of ethnic studies just as is required for all other disciplines.

Linked [HERE](https://example.com) is a helpful infographic that members of the UC Ethnic Studies Faculty Council have developed in order to clarify the important differences between the ethnic studies requirement and the watered-down DEI replacement.

Executive Committee, UCSD Faculty Association
cc: BOARS Chair Madeleine Sorapure
BOARS Analyst Kenneth Feer
UC Systemwide Senate Chair Robert Horwitz
UC Povost Michael Brown
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