

CSULB Academic Senate Feedback Survey Summary
Chancellor's Office ES Survey of Campuses
February 20, 2020

At CSULB, 560 people responded to the survey: 385/69% faculty; 13/2% students; 22/4% administrators; and 135/24% staff. Survey responses (on yes/no votes and in qualitative responses) show mixed thoughts on campus; while respondents seem in favor of the Ethnic Studies content and requirement, they were wholly against legislative interference in CSU curriculum. In what follows below, we list the numerical responses for the yes/no questions and then sample representative responses for each of the five open-ended questions.

Does our campus want a **systemwide** 3-unit lower-division requirement in Ethnic Studies as described in AS-3403-20/AA? 289/59% **Yes**, 200/41% **No**

Does our campus want a **systemwide** upper-division "reflective element" requirement in Ethnic Studies as described in AS-3403-20/AA? 242/51% **Yes**, 231/49% **No**

Does our campus support a broader **systemwide** 3-unit Diversity/Social Justice requirement (which would include courses in ethnic studies as well as those that examine race and ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, religion, spirituality, national origin, immigration status, ability, and/or age)? 310/67% **Yes**, 150/33% **No**

Q1 Ethnic Studies Student Learning Outcomes: Sample Responses (198 comments)

Support outcomes (83): "This work is ESSENTIAL for students. I highly urge CSU to be on the right side of history and vote this in"

Critiques of SLOs as too narrow (26): "These are very narrow and specific learning outcomes. Many of these topics could be approached in a way more relevant to the specific student majors (e.g. in STEM majors or in business) that could benefit from having more contextually specific discussions adapted to specific environments the students are more likely to face. Separately, if mandating specific student courses on a university-system level, the most critical need than ethnic studies is for students is financial literacy, given the high and increasing student debt."

Do not support because of opposition to specific learning outcomes (20): "Learning outcomes as specified will be near impossible to assess adequately."

Do not support because of opposition to the content (28): "Students need to focus their time on campus on topics that are relevant to their degree, not social issues"

Do not support because legislative interference is wrong (21): The bill denies the university and its faculty academic freedom and responsibility to determine course choice and content for students."

Do not support because of GE interference/overload (20): “While we support the wonderful ideas behind this initiative, this is not the way to add additional requirements for our students. It would be best to incorporate these classes into existing coursework that we have (spread through the curriculum) as opposed to adding additional classes for students. Alternatively, each campus could determine what classes currently cover this requirement and find a solution. To continue with our move towards decreasing time to graduation, we need to carefully consider the addition of any class- and consider what gets dropped to compensate. Please let us serve our students. We spend so much of our time thinking about how to facilitate student success.”

Q2 about ES Requirement Structure (3 units LD in GE & UD “reflective element”) (158 comments)

Support (45): The dual requirements are reasonable, and mirror the expectations of lower division "foundation" courses being revisited through upper division GEs prior to graduation”.

Questions and concerns about structure and definitions (35): What does "reflective element" mean? That term seems extremely vague”

Do not support UD requirement (15): “There should not be an upper-division requirement. This will negatively impact high unit majors, such as engineering and natural sciences, to keep to the 120-unit cap and accreditation requirements. It is very less likely that the topics can be integrated into the major requirements in those majors. The campus should also consider resources, such as faculty expertise, funding, and class availabilities, that may affect the implementation of these new requirements and may affect student timely graduation.”

General do not support (49): “I do not support a 3-unit requirement focused solely on ethnic studies.”

No legislative interference (14): “No government intervention in higher education.”

Q3 ES and Subject Matter Expert (SME) Faculty be Included in ES Course Review (172 comments)

Support (61): The courses can be and should be evaluated by the ethnic studies department and they will determine if the course meets the minimum requirements for the AS 3403-20. This will ensure that all areas are being reviewed, implemented and taught to the students.”

Support but concerns about workload and cultural taxation (17): “This is extremely important. But, it is also a clear example of cultural taxation on faculty who are already often doing more service than average, and often are from small departments. How will this crucial work be compensated?”

Concern about who decides who is a SME? (23): “Does this suggest that classes outside of Ethnic Studies will be considered for their potential to meet the SLOs? In that case, what is the ‘subject matter’? Would a class on the Harlem Renaissance potentially fulfill one of these

requirements? Such a class would necessarily explore African American history and artistic expression. Who is the 'subject matter expert' for such a topic?"

Do not support because curriculum review should not be different (30): All matters of curriculum evaluation and approval should move through the usual campus committees and processes. Category B, C, and D GE courses are approved by the GEGC committee, not by faculty in those areas. Privileging one set of faculty in curricular decisions is a bad precedent to set. This also preferences faculty by their departmental placement rather than faculty with expertise. Since a goal of the university should be that there are faculty with a variety of expertises in every department, such a requirement further isolates faculty and treats social justice around issues of ethnic studies as in the providence of only one group of faculty, rather than as a big tent."

Do not support (35): "Absolutely NOT! First, individual academic senates should decide. The faculty should decide. Second, no other subject matter has such privilege and requirement."

Do not support because of legislative interference (6): "Each campus should determine how it approves curriculum. It definitely should not be imposed by state government."

Q4 General Potential Campus Impacts (141 comments)

Support, because the requirement will increase understanding (51): "The potential impact of an Ethnic Studies Requirement will give the campus community the ability to understand other ethnic backgrounds. The community will gain experience on how to engage and support each other. Be mindful of how other peoples experience have an impact on the world around them. Learn the truth about history and polices and how it impacts specific groups of people."

The requirement will be polarizing (7): "Impact will also be on collegiality on campus with faculty and majors pitted against each other and lack of respect and trust among each other."

Campus infrastructure is inadequate (12): "I think there are infrastructure concerns. Perhaps there is a strategic plan for how this could work at our university, but if feedback is being solicited from everyone, then I feel like without that context of what the plan is, I'm mostly thinking of the concerns I have about how this would actually get rolled out."

This is legislative interference (12): AB 1460 is an *extremely* dangerous bill. Not because of the specific contents mandated but because it opens a Pandora's box of legislative interference with the curriculum. If Sacramento can legislate this, what else can they legislate? More to the point, if Sacramento gets into this business, what will Austin or Montgomery be up to? Faculty should oppose AB 1460 on principle.

The requirement will impact faculty hiring (4): "Faculty hiring in other programs will be curtailed to deal with this requirement."

Unaware of student acceptance of the requirement (6): “feel not well informed about the acceptance of ethnic studies as a voluntary subject. If it rates exceptionally low amongst students this proposal would be directed against actual student interest. Since I don't know it is extremely hard to make a reasonable decision at this moment.”

Concerns about impacting the GE program or adding units (29): “Current students following prior GE patterns are required to meet the Global Issues and Human Diversity requirements, which double-count with other GE categories or major requirements. Would these course requirements function in the same way?”

Disagree with the learning outcomes (20): “This feels very narrow and does not encompass all of the other social justice issues that are being experienced in society today.”

Q5 Any other comments (44 total comments)

Strongly support (13): “I strongly support a system wide requirement as well as AB 1460. I believe such a requirement will help our students develop the critical thinking skills that are necessary to successfully navigate an increasingly diversifying society. Further, ethnic studies can help students cultivate an analytical understanding of race and ethnicity that can lead them to challenge structural inequality and their own and other's stereotypes about people of color, leading to the creation of a more just world.”

Strongly support in connection to CSULB's Mission (2): “Having an Ethnic Studies requirement places value on the University's mission and its commitment to racial and ethnic diversity. Great direction.”

Do not support because of the violation of academic freedom (11): “The approach to curriculum development should be comprehensive and bottom up, not top down, and determined by the faculty in the major, then the college, and then the university. Here it is not even the university/campus, but the system senate, and more egregiously the legislature that is legislating curriculum piecemeal for all of CSU. It will do permanent damage to curriculum in the majors and on campus. Campus Autonomy is critical. Indeed, in my opinion, major and college autonomy should be paramount. Anything else will hurt the very students that the state senate and the legislature are purporting to help. Really bad idea!!!”

Concern about cost to students in \$ or degree changes (5): “This seems to be an excellent idea but I am concerned about adding units, time to degree, and increased costs to students. Embedded may work better.”

Concerns about GE self-governance and campus leadership (5): “The CO, Board of Trustees, Campus Presidents are out of touch with the future. You all need to step down”

General Objection (8): “Strongly object to adding these.”