

State of California
M e m o r a n d u m

CAL POLY

San Luis Obispo, California

To: Task Force on Diversity in the Academic Curriculum (*membership list attached*)

Date: May 1, 2003

From: W. David Conn
Vice Provost for Academic Programs
and Undergraduate Education

Cc: Warren J. Baker
Paul J. Zingg
Cornel Morton
Unny Menon
Denise Campbell
Deans
Associate Deans
Jacob Parnell

Subject: Diversity in the Academic Curriculum: Charge

In his Fall Convocation remarks, President Baker gave a clear directive to the campus that Cal Poly must focus on student success, diversity, and civility as priority initiatives to accomplish our institutional goals.

Cal Poly's *Strategic Plan* has identified specific goals for diversity and the creation of academic and cultural programs that help achieve it. *Visionary Pragmatism* identified as one of the characteristics of a Cal Poly graduate that s/he will "understand and function in an increasingly multicultural, multiracial, and international environment". Such goals and statements are consistent with new research in the disciplines and with national and regional educational practice, as manifested in criteria employed by our regional accrediting agency (WASC) as well as most disciplinary and professional accrediting agencies.

Our stated goals are inextricably linked to, and represented by, our curriculum. Gender and diversity are addressed in a distinct standard of GE 2001. The standard is not reflected in the requirements for any particular GE area or course; instead, it states that "all GE courses are expected to address issues of gender and diversity within the context of the material presented in the course." Beginning with the 1994-97 catalog, all students have been required to complete one course satisfying specified criteria for U.S. Cultural Pluralism. Some but not all USCP courses have also met GE requirements.

Under the leadership of co-chairs Anny Morrobel-Sosa (until her departure from Cal Poly) and Doug Cerf, I am requesting that you become part of a task force to examine the treatment of diversity in Cal Poly's academic curriculum. Specifically, I would like you to examine the extent to which we are already accomplishing the goals stated in Cal Poly's *Strategic Plan*, *Visionary Pragmatism*, and other relevant documents, focusing as much as possible on demonstrable outcomes rather than inputs alone. At the heart of the matter is the question: have we prepared (and are we preparing) our students in their disciplines in order to be successful professionals, civic leaders, and informed citizens in a diverse national and global society?

continued

Drawing on the results of this examination as well as related information, such as knowledge gained from research conducted elsewhere, I request that you formulate recommendations on how we might better accomplish the goals through changes in curriculum, pedagogy, and co-curricular activities. Your recommendations should incorporate implementation strategies and timelines. Please keep in mind that, as part of our student success initiative, we are trying at the same time to simplify our curricular requirements and to remove unnecessary obstacles slowing progress to degree, while attempting to maintain or improve student learning.

I would appreciate receiving your recommendations no later than the end of fall quarter 2003. Please keep me updated regularly with brief written progress reports.

Task Force Membership

Anny Morrobel-Sosa, *co-chair*
Doug Cerf, *co-chair*
Alipios Chatziioanou
Charise Cheney
Donna Davis
George Lewis
Michael Lucas
Ruby Moz
John Orijj
Doug Piirto
Don Ryujin
Debra Valencia-Laver
Dan Villegas
Mary Whiteford
Maliha Zulfacar
Another student (to be named)