

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Asian American Studies Program Performance Review

Dean's Summary Report and Recommendations

Angela Della Volpe, Dean

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**Dean's Summary Report and Recommendations
Program Performance Review for the
Asian American Studies Program
B.A. in Ethnic Studies with an Option in Asian American Studies
Minor in Asian American Studies**

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During the 2010-11 academic year, the Asian American Studies Program, under the leadership of Program Coordinator Dr. Eliza Noh, engaged in the program performance review process by conducting a self-study that is summarized in the enclosed report. In February, 2011, two external reviewers, Dr. Grace Yoo from San Francisco State and Dr. Yen Le Espiritu from University of California, San Diego and one on-campus reviewer, Dr. Jesse Battan from the CSUF American Studies Department, conducted a day long site visit. After reviewing the program's self-study report and interviewing the program coordinator, faculty members, the college dean, students and others, the reviewers prepared a joint report.

To provide a context for this summary and recommendations, a 7-year history of the department's enrollments and other benchmark statistics are provided below:

Year	FTEs:	FTEs:	% Target	FTEF Allocation	Budgeted SFR	Achieved SFR	Majors AY Headcount*		Minors AY Headcount*
	Target	Actual					1st	2nd	
2004-2005	74	73.3	99%	3.8	19.5	19.3	11.0	2.0	7.5
2005-2006	85	80.6	95%	5.0	17.0	16.1	10.5	2.5	5.5
2006-2007	100	77.6	78%	5.0	20.0	15.5	15.0	1.5	3.0
2007-2008	115	76.9	67%	5.0	23.0	15.4	11.5	1.0	4.5
2008-2009	113	76.5	67%	4.9	23.0	15.5	12.0	1.5	5.0
2009-2010	84	103.5	123%	4.0	21.0	25.9	11.5	2.5	7.0
2010-2011	119	120.7	101%	4.9	24.3	24.6	13.5	2.0	5.0
% Change from 2004-05 to 2009-10	60.8%	64.7%		28.9%	24.7%	27.7%	22.7%	0%	-33%

*Source: IRAS website; annualized number of majors and minors

During the first two years of the period under review, the Asian American Studies Program achieved, or nearly achieved target, but with budgeted SFRs of 19.5 and 17.0, both significantly lower than that of the College SFR of 25.1. Beginning in academic year 2006-07, the budgeted SFR was gradually increased in an effort to align the expectations for the program with those for similar departments.

Beginning in 2006-07, the Asian American Studies Program experienced an alarming period where achieved FTES remained flat despite increased FTEF allocation and corresponding increased FTES target—this during a time of significant growth in the College FTES. In the years 2006-07 through 2008-09 the department achieved less than 80% of its FTES target; however significant growth in achieved FTES followed. In 2009-10 the program achieved 103.5 FTES, 123% of target, and in 2010-11 the program achieved 120.7 FTES, coming in at 101% of target. This significant growth in FTES followed a drastic measure on the part of the College administration dictated, in part, by reduced FTEF allocation to the College.

Thus, partly due to the continued low enrollments, where the program did not meet its FTES targets, and partly due to the challenging budget environment, the FTEF allocation to the program was reduced to 4.0 FTEF in 2009-10 while the program was home to five tenured and tenure-track faculty members. This situation required the “lending” of Asian American Studies faculty to other departments for a total of four courses. To achieve this with minimal disruption to faculty and faculty schedules, we utilized four cross-listed courses so that faculty continued to teach courses in their areas of expertise; however, the FTES accumulated through student enrollment in those courses were assigned to the departments paying for the services of the Asian American Studies faculty. To their credit, the faculty responded by identifying ways to tighten their schedule of course offerings, increase outreach to students, and increase course enrollments. These actions resulted in the program achieving, for the first time, an SFR comparable to that of departments of similar size. This remarkable and successful turnaround is the result of the faculty taking an honest assessment of its practices and making significant changes.

From the first year of the review period, 2004-05, to the last, 2010-11, the Asian American Studies Program saw a 64% increase in achieved FTES. During that same time period, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences increased in FTES by only 9%. This is impressive evidence of growth for this small program. The growth in achieved FTES has not been a gradual, sustained climb; rather, there was a surge in FTES observed in 2009-10 that continued in 2010-11. While the census numbers for fall 2011 are not yet available, the strong enrollments continued in fall 2011 with the program achieving approximately 130 FTES, a little over 100% of target. The performance in the last few years is directly related to the faculty efforts to revamp the program's schedule of classes as well as their efforts to make the program more visible to students.

There were 13 primary and secondary Asian American Studies majors in 2004-05. By 2010-11 the number increased to only 15. The number of Asian American Studies minors declined from 7 to 5 during the period under review while the number of students declaring an H&SS minor increased by 18%. Because the number of Asian American Studies majors and minors has not increased by a significant degree, it is reasonably concluded that the increased enrollments in the Asian American Studies Program are due to a rise in the number of students taking their courses for GE credits.

Program Mission, Goals and Environment

At the time of the self study, the Asian American Studies Program had not yet developed its mission statement, but the faculty have devoted a great deal of time and effort identifying their core values, program goals and student learning goals and outcomes. A unique and meritorious characteristic of this program is its emphasis on civic engagement and community involvement. This aspect of the Asian American Studies Program benefits student learning through hands on experience in internships and benefits the community through the services provided.

The program's self study is comprehensive and detailed. However there are some misstatements in Section I, Program Mission, Goals and Environment, possibly the result of misunderstanding, that may lead to inaccurate perceptions or conclusions. These are listed and addressed below:

- In Chart 1, titled Summary of Successful Achievements and Activities, under Teaching, it is stated that there are “increasing number of majors and minors” (p. 4). *In the seven years since the last review, the number of majors, including both primary and secondary majors, has grown by only two students and the number of minors has declined.*
- “The Division of Academic Affairs altered its policy on providing assigned time for research to faculty beyond their second year beginning in Fall 2008.” (p.11) *The Division of Academic Affairs did not have a policy of providing assigned time for research for faculty after the second year in a tenure-track position. The College of Humanities and Social Sciences' practice of offering junior faculty the opportunity to apply for assigned time for research was suspended in 2008 in order to meet fiscal responsibilities.*
- “Junior faculty faced a 4-course-per-semester teaching load, with an average of 30-40 students per section, for an average of 140-160 students per semester.” (p. 11) *The data do not support this claim. If we look at the more recent semesters when enrollments were the highest (thus ignoring the semesters where enrollments were at their lowest), the average number of students per section in the years spanning 2008-09 to 2010-11 was about 30, with the highest number occurring in Spring 2011 where the average was 35. The average (over the last four terms) number of students taught per semester by tenured and tenure-track faculty ranges between 106 and 121 students. In three of the last four terms, the faculty taught four courses each (except for the program coordinator who taught three). In spring 2011, three of the faculty members taught only two courses, one taught three courses and one taught four—and the faculty member teaching a four-course load was not a junior faculty member. To provide some comparative data, we looked at workload and enrollments for faculty in another small department, Comparative Religion. Like Asian American Studies, Comparative Religion has five tenured and tenure-track faculty members. Using data for the same four terms (fall 2009, 2010, spring 2010, 2011), the average number of students taught per semester by tenured and tenure-track faculty ranges between 104 and 134 students. Comparative Religion tenured and tenure-track faculty almost always teach four courses per semester, except for the Chair who teaches three.*

- Referring to the loss of FTEF and the faculty efforts to make target, the self study acknowledges, “These efforts resulted in a restoration of .5 FTEF in Spring 2010. However, the increased enrollments also resulted in an adjusted higher FTES target and additional workload stress for faculty.”(p. 11) *Despite repeated meetings with the Associate Dean and College Business Manager where the relationship between FTEF and FTES target has been explained, this quote from the self study does not take into account that relationship. The restoration of .5 FTEF resulted in a slightly higher FTES target because the target is derived from the following formula: FTES Target=FTEF x SFR. If the FTEF increases and the SFR remains constant, the target increases. This formula is applied to all departments and programs in the College.*
- In addressing the College decision to reduce the FTEF allocation, the self study narrative indicates, “Since ASAM had already lost its budget for lecturers, the cuts came in the form of lost FTEF.” (p11) *It should be noted that all H&SS departments and programs experienced a reduction in FTEF as a consequence of the reduced FTEF allocation to the College from the University. The Asian American Studies Program had made the decision to hire beyond the recommended “80% rule” of its usual allocation—a rule in place for just those occasions when allocations are reduced. Their decision to fill their FTEF allocation to 100% with tenured and tenure-track faculty resulted in zero part time faculty budget; the part-time faculty budget was not “lost” or taken away. The only way to implement the Asian American Studies Program’s share of the budget reduction was to reduce the FTEF below the number of filled positions; hence the reassignment of tenured and tenure track faculty to teach four cross-listed courses. For most all other H&SS academic units, the reduced FTEF resulted in fewer dollars available for hiring part-time faculty.*

There is no doubt that the faculty in Asian American Studies have felt under pressure during the last few years of the review. This is especially difficult for junior faculty to endure as they experience the competing demands to teach new classes, support students, develop curricula and advance research agendas. We must also remember that junior faculty enter the academy with minimal understanding of budgets, the importance of class enrollments and the CSU currency system of FTES, FTEF and SFR.

Program Description and Analysis

Program Changes

The new faculty have brought exciting and popular new courses to the program curriculum. They have embraced online instruction and have several courses that are regularly taught using this instructional delivery method.

Degree Structure

The degree structure allows for an especially strong alignment of program learning goals and curriculum. All majors take a common core of four classes and all majors are required to complete 6 units in Community Research. The learning goals of Critical

Thinking and Communication, Knowledge, and Social Awareness/Civic Engagement are clearly developed as students move through the degree requirements.

With the exception of the ASAM 495 Internship class, there are no 400 level courses for majors only. At this stage in the program's development, there are simply not enough majors to fill even one 400-level course per year. Except for ASAM 495, all ASAM courses are filled with a mixture of some majors and a majority of GE students; since there are few, if any, ASAM prerequisites for the vast majority of the ASAM courses, instructors cannot assume depth of knowledge or prior experience with the concepts and themes in Asian American Studies.

Demand and Enrollment Trends

The Asian American Studies Program has achieved and exceeded target for the past four semesters. Clearly there is good interest and demand for the courses offered by the program. The faculty are to be praised and encouraged for their efforts to revamp the weak schedules that resulted in lackluster enrollments in the years 2006-07 through 2008-09. While it was painful to experience the reduced FTEF allocation and the consequent "lending out" of faculty, the faculty responded to this wakeup call in the best possible fashion—namely, by taking steps to strengthen the schedule and increase the visibility of the program. The program core values focus on the health and well-being of the faculty. The stress caused by low enrollments and threats of funding losses makes it clear that attention to rational scheduling that meets student needs and interests is of at least equal importance to faculty preferences for certain schedules and course loads.

Documentation of Student Academic Achievement and Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

The Asian American Studies faculty have identified three student learning goals. According to the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness website, there are four student learning outcomes under the goal of Knowledge, three learning outcomes under the goal of Critical Thinking and Communicating, and two outcomes associated with the goal of Social Awareness and Civic Engagement. The self study did not address the learning outcomes at all and it appears there has been no attempt thus far to measure the program's effectiveness in achieving these outcomes.

The self study provided impressive student statements about the ways the Asian American Studies courses have impacted their lives. There is no question in my mind that the students find these courses valuable and that they learn lessons that will be with them for their lifetimes. That said, student narratives do not comprise an adequate assessment program. The summary table found in Appendix III, Documenting Academic Achievement, inaccurately identifies the program's Assessment Strategies as *highly developed*. The measures of student learning described in the self study represent assessments conducted by individual faculty in individual courses. There needs to be a systematic effort to collect data on the program goals and student learning outcomes.

Faculty

Five faculty members comprise the program faculty—three are tenured and two are tenure-track. These five faculty bring expertise from a variety of disciplines which support the strong interdisciplinary focus of the program. The junior faculty appear to be making good progress toward tenure.

Student Support and Advising

The program identifies one faculty member to assume the role of ASAM Student Advisor. This person meets with the 20 or so ASAM majors/minors each semester to review progress toward the degree, conduct grad checks, and advises students about other sources of support services.

Resources and Facilities

The department resources and facilities are adequate at this time. By the end of the fall 2011 semester, all five faculty members should occupy offices on the third floor of the Humanities and Social Sciences Building. For the past several years, two of the junior faculty have occupied offices on the second floor.

As noted in the self-study, the classrooms assigned to this program are small and during the years of low enrollment these rooms rarely enrolled to capacity. However, it is clear from the enrollments achieved in the past four terms that these rooms are no longer adequate. Larger classrooms (capacity: 32 and 35) were allocated to the program for 2011-12 and we are aware of the need for access to even larger classrooms in the future.

Space on the second floor of University Hall was designated for the Asian American and Pacific Islander Resource Center in summer 2008 in response to the center proposal submitted in fall 2007. While the College provided the space, along with computers and technical support, the College is not in a position to provide a budget for the center. The Chicano Resource Center receives funding from Student Affairs. There are common challenges for the student centers in addition to funding—it is unrealistic to rely on faculty to direct such centers and without funding, full time personnel cannot be hired to do so. Faculty should play a role in assisting with the planning and implementation of academic programs, but support staff are needed to keep the centers open and operating. There have been few programs held in the Asian American Pacific Islander Resource Center and the faculty have struggled to get the center off the ground.

Reviewers' Report

In their report, the reviewers commended the faculty for their strong research agendas, outstanding teaching and community involvement. They note the success of the faculty in obtaining external grants as well as the recognition, both locally and nationally, for their outstanding teaching. They identified the program's focus on community engagement as a foundation that serves to integrate the faculty research, teaching and service.

The reviewers identified three problems and challenges:

- 1) *Enrollments*: This has been discussed elsewhere.

- 2) *Perceived Threat to Program Stability*: Citing the reduction in FTEF following years of lackluster enrollments and failure to meet target, the reviewers report that the faculty perceived this as a threat to the stability of the program. However, they note that after successfully meeting enrollment targets, the FTEF had been restored. Indeed, for 2011-12, the FTEF allocation to the program is once again 5.0—a faculty position to cover each of the full time professors. As the reviewers note, the College has continuously supported this fledgling program with SFRs below that assigned to the College.
- 3) *Inadequate Support for Staff and Resource Center*: Since the time of the writing of the reviewers' report, a full time Administrative Support Coordinator has been hired to support the faculty in Asian American Studies, Afro-Ethnic Studies and Chicana/o Studies. Since there is no budget for staff for the resource center, this challenge remains to be addressed. Unfortunately, the solution to the problem remains at the University level as the College cannot be expected to support general student centers that support students across the University.

The reviewers made three excellent recommendations:

- 1) *Develop an assessment program, including identification of student learning goals*: The program has identified student learning goals and these are posted on the website of the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness. (Note: the learning goals were not listed in the self study so it may be that these were developed subsequent to the writing of the self study.) The reviewers encourage the faculty to develop an assessment system that utilizes direct assessment techniques that address the program learning goals. The current assessments are conducted at the level of individual courses and are often in the form of self-report student narratives.
- 2) *Protect faculty time*: The reviewers recommend that the faculty decrease the number of meetings and identify priorities.
- 3) *Explore funding for the resource center*: Recognizing that the resource center cannot function on the energy of faculty alone, the reviewers recommend that funding for staff be sought.

Dean's Recommendations

First, I commend the program faculty for their accomplishments of the last few years. The assistant professors are working hard as they further their research agendas and publish, all the while providing quality classes for their students.

I have several responses and recommendations to share.

Increase the number of students majoring in Asian American Studies.

Without a critical mass of majors, the program remains too dependent on GE and cannot offer its majors a variety of classes for the major alone or at the 400 level. Increasing the number of majors should be a primary focus of faculty efforts as they develop an ongoing

strategy for promoting the program to new students. I note that in the last Program Performance Review the dean recommended making this a priority—I concur. Seven years later, this continues to be a priority, especially considering that the number of majors has increased only marginally.

Degree Structure

The Asian American Studies Program shares its degree program with Afro-Ethnic Studies and Chicana/o Studies. According to UPS 410.104, these options for the bachelor's degree in Ethnic Studies must share a common core curriculum (<12 units). Currently, these three options share AFRO/ASAM/CHIC 101 but AFRO majors and CHIC majors are not required to take this class; AFRO/ASAM/CHIC 307 satisfies the upper division writing requirement for all three options, but AFRO majors and CHIC majors may take ENGL 301 instead so this class does not represent a common core class. Thus, there is no common core of classes shared by the options in the Ethnic Studies degree. The faculty in the ethnic studies departments and program should discuss this situation and establish a true common core for the Ethnic Studies degree. In their separate Program Performance Reviews, I have encouraged the Afro-Ethnic Studies Department and the Chicana/o Studies Department to do this. Further, I have recommended that a cross-listed 400-level course be developed and required for students in all three options. Once the common core is identified, I recommend that faculty from each program/department identify course objectives for each of these common courses. *I would like to see this accomplished by the end of the 2011-12 academic year and will expect to see a report of the outcome of this work in the individual annual reports. Further, I would like a progress report by the beginning of the spring 2012 semester.*

As mentioned above, I recommend that a new 400-level course, cross-listed with AFRO and CHIC, be developed and required for all students earning the Ethnic Studies degree. With the exception of the internship course, ASAM 495, the current option in Asian American Studies does not require any 400 level courses. Students majoring in Ethnic Studies with an option in Asian American Studies have too few opportunities to take courses with students sharing the major. This makes it all the more imperative that the faculty collaborate with the faculty from the other Ethnic Studies Departments to create a senior level course that can be populated with students sharing the same degree program. *I would like to see a draft new course proposal by the end of the spring 2012 semester.*

Assessment

Each option for the bachelor's degree in Ethnic Studies has identified its own learning goals and student learning outcomes, but there are no learning goals or student learning outcomes identified for the overall Ethnic Studies degree. This should be remedied. I strongly recommend that the faculty from Afro-Ethnic Studies, Asian American Studies and Chicana/o Studies schedule some joint meetings to identify the learning goals and student learning outcomes for the umbrella degree program. Next, assessment should take place at the *degree level*. If the degree options shared 3-4 common core courses as recommended above, assessment data could be collected in these courses and growth in knowledge and skills could be readily measured.

Meanwhile, the department needs to move forward with its own assessment program. Which courses cover which goals? Can a student complete the requirements for the degree and miss preparation for particular outcomes? If so, the degree requirements should be redesigned so as to ensure concepts relating to all learning goals are introduced, developed and mastered. The program faculty need to map the required courses against the individual student learning outcomes to see where concepts and skills are introduced, developed and mastered. A curriculum map will allow the faculty to identify gaps in the program; if there are gaps, then a restructuring of the requirements and/or a revised vision of the curriculum should be considered. Once the curriculum map has been developed, the faculty will be ready to embark on a schedule of collecting data to measure student success at achieving the identified goals. I recommend that the faculty develop a modest schedule of measuring achievement for 1-2 goals per year. *I would like to see the curriculum map in the program's annual report submitted in June, 2012.*

Conclusion

While the program faltered in the middle years of the review period, I am confident that the faculty are on track to take the Asian American Studies Program to the next level. They are a collegial group and are dedicated to strengthening the program, contributing to the community and serving their students.