

April 6, 2016

Ralph Hexter, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor
University of California, Davis

Brenda Schildgen, Chair
Faculty Executive Committee of the College of Letters and Science

RE: Departmental Status Proposal – American Studies Program

Dear Colleagues:

The Departmental Status Proposal for the American Studies Program was forwarded to all standing committees of the Davis Division of the Academic Senate, including school and college Faculty Executive Committees. Responses were received from the Committees on Planning & Budget, Undergraduate Council, and Graduate Council.

All committees support the proposal. The Graduate Council notes that reconstitution as a department will “enhance the stability and stature of the program at UC Davis, within the UC system, and beyond.” Similarly, the Undergraduate Council believes that the program fills an “important intellectual niche” and appeals “to a very diverse group of students” at UC Davis. The Graduate Council also raised a recommendation for strengthening the proposal; it is attached for review.

The Davis Division supports the creation of the Department of American Studies.

Sincerely,



André Knoesen
Chair, Academic Senate
Professor: Electrical and Computer Engineering

Attachments: Committee Response Report

- c. Julie Sze, Director, American Studies Program
Edwin M. Arevalo, Executive Director, Davis Division of the Academic Senate

Planning & Budget

April 5, 2016 8:39 PM

CPB reviewed the Departmental Status Proposal for the American Studies Program. The committee supports the departmental status proposal.

Graduate Council

March 29, 2016 11:43 AM

Response continued on next page.

UC DAVIS: ACADEMIC SENATE
GRADUATE COUNCIL
ACADEMIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

March 29, 2016

To: Academic Chair Knoesen
Re: Departmental Status Proposal for the American Studies Program

The Graduate Council, partially based on the deliberations of its subcommittee on Academic Planning and Development is responding to your request for comment to the departmental status proposal of American Studies.

The Program in American Studies requests disestablishment as a program and reconstitution as an academic department. This is a sensible goal, since departmental status would enhance the stability and stature of the program at UC Davis, within the UC system, and beyond. In addition, departmental status would strengthen the members' voice in planning and development activities of the College of Letters and Science.

The American Studies Program has been operating for over 40 years, which distinguishes the program as the first of its kind within the UC system. Faculty members belonging to the program are highly accomplished in their respective areas of study. The program offers popular undergraduate courses and handles a large number of student credit hours. Recent hires have enabled the program to provide coverage of transnational issues and attract international students.

With respect to graduate education, the faculty members regularly contribute to the workings of the Cultural Studies Graduate Group. They serve in the mentoring of Cultural Studies graduate students, who work as TAs for the courses offered by the American Studies Program. Departmental status would likely reinforce this mentoring relationship and stabilize the TA opportunities of graduate students within Cultural Studies.

The previous review of the program identified a low number of program majors as a concern. The program has taken steps to increase the number of majors, including efforts toward advising and outreach. The proposal argues that departmental status would help attract more majors. It would have been helpful for the proposal to provide information regarding the number of majors in recent years. That is important, missing information.

In summary, the proposed change to departmental status is sensible; it would stabilize American Studies' contributions to graduate studies. Graduate Council supports the request for departmental status.

Sincerely,



Kyaw Tha Paw U, Chair
Graduate Council

Undergraduate Council

March 23, 2016 10:23 AM

The Undergraduate Council feels this is a strong program that fills an important intellectual niche at UCD. Departmental status will allow American Studies to expand its faculty, course offerings, and appeal to a very diverse group of students; therefore Undergraduate Council unanimously supports the proposed disestablishing the present program and reconstituting it as an academic department.