

**ACADEMIC SENATE
OF
THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY**

AS-3379-19/FA/AA
May 16-17, 2019

**FOSTERING A WELCOMING AND SAFE CAMPUS CLIMATE FOR
BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS**

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU) urge that all CSU campuses and the Chancellor's Office modify mission statements and strategic planning documents to espouse the importance of recruiting, retaining and graduating Black/African-American students; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the ASCSU urge that CSU campuses continue to report all racist incidents directed toward faculty, staff and students of African descent, which contribute to unwelcome and unsafe campus climates that negatively impact recruitment, retention and graduation rates; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the ASCSU recommend that campus presidents, provosts and appropriate committees take the following actions forthwith and regularly thereafter:

- a) Thoughtfully conceive and implement cluster hires of faculty members and counselors with a demonstrated record of research, teaching, and/or service focused on Black/African-American issues and populations.
- b) Provide training opportunities and reassigned time for faculty to infuse culturally relevant pedagogy for Black/African Americans into the curriculum.
- c) Provide education and training for faculty, staff and students to learn about the politics of racial resentment, dominant group power and privilege, and White fragility, and ensure special focus on their deleterious effects on campus climate and student well-being.
- d) Specify within campus diversity plans how Black/African American students can be better served.
- e) Develop and implement practices for assessing the readiness of prospective students, faculty and staff to engage in a culturally diverse environment to help inform campus programming.

- f) Revise orientation programs (e.g., faculty, new student, transfer, staff) to include a focus on the following: i) building community with Black/African American students faculty and staff, ii) creating expectations among incoming students about cultural competency, iii) providing some initial training on cultural competency, and iv) connecting Black/African American students with Black organizations on the campus and in the broader community.
- g) Increase funding for Black Resource Centers to support student-operated programming on campuses that presently have Black Resource Centers and initiate funding for Black Resource Centers on campuses that don't presently have one.
- h) Gather data about campus police interactions with Black/African American students to hold campus police departments accountable.

; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the ASCSU distribute this resolution to the CSU Board of Trustees, CSU Chancellor, CSU campus Presidents, CSU campus Senate Chairs, CSU Provosts/Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs/Vice Presidents of Student Affairs, the California Faculty Association (CFA), California State Student Association (CSSA), and the Emeritus and Retired Faculty and Staff Association (ERFSA).

RATIONALE: Since 2017 alone there have been more than 23 instances of racism on CSU campuses covered by the mainstream media (see Appendix A). These instances do not include race-based microaggressions, unreported racist threats, taunts, or assaults, classroom-related assumptions and behaviors based on those assumptions, etc. Given the numerous reported accounts of anti-Black, race-based incidents on CSU campuses, we believe it is long past overdue to work to ensure our Black/African American students thrive on our campuses.

In W. E. B. DuBois' most important work, "The Souls of Black Folk", he noted about the Black American experience, "It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness-an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body,

whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being tom asunder.”¹ Since the moment of America’s Original Sin, Black folk and African Americans have traversed the physical and temporal planes of existence as two people – Black and American. And, since America’s Original Sin, the fabric of American society – laws, culture, institutions, education, – was developed to ensure exclusion of the humans who are the embodiment of that Original Sin.

According to new research by the University of Southern California Race and Equity Center², the average of the CSU System’s Equity Indicator is 2.3, below the already abysmal California average of 2.46. This suggests the People’s University is doing even less than the University of California (UC) System to support its Black/African American Students (4.1% of the CSU student body)³. In fact, as Appendix B shows, only CSU Fresno and CSU Monterey Bay achieved the highest score of 3 out of 5, while CSU Chico and San José State University had the lowest at 1.5 out of 5 on the Equity Index.

For the Black/African American college students who have managed to be born, thrive in childhood, survive into adulthood, and ignore the hateful messages spewn upon themselves by the dominant group via it’s hegemonic ideology, they arrive at an institution of higher education where they are happily counted and highlighted in the school’s demographic data while at the same time often finding themselves marginalized, misunderstood, prejudged, and even sometimes hated. Their bodies and minds encounter the institution where they struggle against racism and stereotype threat⁴. They often engage in John Henryism⁵ – a paradox of resiliency – in an effort to not only assuage the discomfort of non-

¹ W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: New American Library, 1969 [1903]), 45.

² Harper, S. R., & Simmons, I. (2019). “Black students at public colleges and universities: A 50-state report card”. Los Angeles: University of Southern California, Race and Equity Center.

³ CSU 2018 Fact Book.

⁴ “a situational predicament in which a “stereotype about one of our own identities could be applied to us” and we “know that anything we do that fits the stereotype could be taken as confirming it.” We “know we could be judged and treated accordingly” (5). Steele, Claude M. 2010. *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do*. New York: Norton.

⁵ John Henryism is where Black/African American students perform a “kind of self-control that ... can trigger the persistent release of stress hormones, with rare opportunities for breaks to recharge, which contributes to ill health” (19). In Verschelden, Cia. 2017. “Bandwidth Recovery: Helping Students Reclaim Cognitive Resources Lost to Poverty, Racism, and Social Marginalization”. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Black/African Americans, but to prove wrong the stereotypes presented to them as a mirror.

Research shows cluster hiring is one of the most impactful ways to build faculty diversity. This cluster hiring should be focused in disciplines that have limited representation from Black/African-American faculty but that demonstrate cultural competency and prior commitment to Black students and communities.

The purpose of this resolution is to engage in an act of love. To acknowledge the marginalization of Black bodies exists on college campuses, including the CSU. It is to act to undermine and disrupt those institutional roots that have served to hold people down. It is to hold ourselves accountable to what we have all been a part of and to, with deliberateness and mindfulness, take the first steps to make change. .

Approved Unanimously – May 16-17, 2019