Adopted: June 9, 1998

ACADEMIC SENATE
Of
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
San Luis Obispo, CA

AS-506-98/DTF
RESOLUTION ON
THE CAL POLY STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate at Cal Poly accept and endorse The Cal Poly Statement on Diversity attached; and, be it further

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate in partnership with its administration devise plans and strategies to promulgate and implement the diversity and educational objectives outlined in The Cal Poly Statement on Diversity; and, be it further

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate recommend to its administration that the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs provide an annual assessment of the previously mentioned partnership's diversity related activities to the Academic Senate.

Proposed by: The Diversity Task Force
Date: April 21, 1998
Revised: June 8, 1998

*THE CAL POLY STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY**

At the heart of a university is the responsibility for providing its students with a well-rounded education, an education that fosters their intellectual, personal and social growth. For students preparing to embark upon work and life in the 21st century, a critical element of a well-rounded education is the ability to understand and to function effectively in a diverse and increasingly interdependent global society. As noted in a recent statement from the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), "the argument for the necessity of diversity is perhaps stronger in higher education than in any other context... The ultimate product of universities is education in the broadest sense, including preparation for life in the working world." In this regard, it is in the compelling interest of Cal Poly, the state, and the nation to provide our students with an education that is rich with a diversity of ideas, perspectives, and experiences.

Thus, diversity serves as a fundamental means to enhance both the quality and value of education. It cannot be a mere adjunct to such an education but must be an integral element of the educational experience, infused throughout the community (faculty, students, and staff), the curriculum, and the cocurricular programs of the University.

- As a University whose motto is "to learn by doing," Cal Poly explicitly understands the importance that experience brings to education. When students are exposed personally and directly to faculty, staff, and other students from diverse backgrounds, their stereotypes about "the other" are challenged. As the AAUP statement notes, such personal interaction gives students an understanding of the "range of similarities and differences within and among ... groups" that "no textbook or computer" can provide. For this reason, both the formal and informal classroom (i.e., the rich learning experiences that occur for our students during their cocurricular activities), must be constituted in a way that reinforces the value of encountering and considering diversity.

- Moreover, diversity in the curriculum is a fundamental component of a well-rounded and beneficial education. The perspectives provided by the University are contingent upon the content and purpose of its courses. Since the curriculum is the principal expression of our educational goals and values, it must signal the importance of diversity to the Cal Poly mission, to the institutional culture, and to our teaching and learning environment in clear and unambiguous terms.

Thus, the University community (its students, faculty, and staff), the curriculum, and the co-curricular environment must be dedicated to the principle of ensuring that all of our students routinely encounter diverse people, ideas, and experiences.

Only through intellectual and first-hand personal exposure to diversity in its myriad forms-racial, ethnic, cultural, gender, geographic, socioeconomic, etc.-will students gain the understanding, empathy, and social skills that they will require to be effective, engaged citizens in an increasingly crowded and interrelated global community. The benefit of diversity is universal. Cal Poly's commitment to diversity signals an affirmation of the highest educational goals of this University, including mutual respect, civility, and engaged learning.

*The definition of diversity is specifically inclusive of, but not limited to, an individual's race/ethnicity, sex/gender, socioeconomic status, cultural heritage, disability, and sexual orientation.

State of California

M e m o r a n d u m

To: Myron Hood
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: September 18, 1998

From: Warren J. Baker
President

Copies: Paul J. Zingg
Harvey Greenwald
Linda Dalton

Subject: AS-505-98/DTF, Resolution on the Academic Value of Diversity
AS-506-98/DTF, Resolution on *The Cal Poly Statement on Diversity*

I am pleased to accept Resolutions AS-505-98/DTF and AS-506-98/DTF.

The Academic Senate is to be applauded for its clear affirmation of the educational values of diversity and its recognition that diversity strengthens our community and prepares our students more fully for effective citizenry, responsible careers and engaged lives.

Both resolutions underscore the University's values that are imbedded in our Mission Statement and Strategic Plan. The voice of the Senate in these matters will strengthen the University's ability to continue its efforts to foster greater diversity among our students, faculty and staff. Clearly aligning Cal Poly with the important statements on diversity that the nation's principal educational associations have made signals our commitment and resolve.

I look forward to working with the Senate and our entire University community in achieving the promise within these resolutions.