

Adopted: December 3, 2019

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

AS-883-19

RESOLUTION ON UPDATING THE UNITED STATES CULTURAL  
PLURALISM (USCP) CRITERIA

**Impact on Existing Policy: This Resolution Supersedes AS-676-09**

1 WHEREAS, Cal Poly’s current United States Cultural Pluralism criteria (AS-676-  
2 09) serves as the basis for United States Cultural Pluralism courses  
3 and has not been updated in at least ten years; and,  
4

5 WHEREAS, The Diversity and Inclusion Working Group for the General  
6 Education Governance Board, the Office of University Diversity and  
7 Inclusion, and the General Education Governance Board determined  
8 that the current USCP criteria needed to be clarified and updated;  
9 therefore, be it  
10

11 RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of Cal Poly approve the attached revised  
12 United States Cultural Pluralism criteria which immediately replace  
13 and supersede the previous USCP criteria.

Proposed by: General Education Governance Board &  
Office of University Diversity & Inclusion  
Date: October 15, 2019

**Revised USCP Criteria:**

USCP courses must fulfill *all* of the following criteria; and, according to AS-836-17, they must also address the Diversity Learning Objectives (DLOs). USCP courses must:

**CR1:** Focus on one or more diverse groups (identified in the [Cal Poly Statement on Diversity](#)) whose contributions to American society have been impeded by social, cultural, legal, economic, and political conflict or whose social, cultural, legal, economic, and political opportunities have been restricted in the United States;

**CR2:** Cover the historical and/or contemporary social issues resulting from conflict or restricted opportunities that include but are not limited to problems associated with discrimination based on age, ethnicity, gender, nationality, abilities, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or race in the United States;

**CR3:** Address the diverse intellectual, philosophical, and cultural perspectives of historically marginalized people in the United States;

**CR4:** Emphasize the voices and contributions of historically marginalized groups in the United States such that the course content must prominently include sources written and/or produced by historically marginalized people;

**CR5:** Foster critical thinking skills by using intersectional frameworks of analyses that are necessary for adequately understanding and analyzing various social issues related to diversity and equity in the United States;

**CR6:** Require students to examine critically their own beliefs, attitudes, and potential biases related to historically marginalized people in the United States.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

AS-395-92 Resolution Relating to a Cultural Pluralism Requirement requires that, beginning with the 1994-96 catalog, all Cal Poly undergraduates must fulfill a cultural pluralism baccalaureate requirement that consists of a single course satisfying a defined set of criteria.

The AS-651-06 Resolution on Cal Poly Learning Objectives establishes University Learning Objectives as a broadly shared set of educational expectations for all students who complete an undergraduate or graduate program at Cal Poly.

AS-663-08 Resolution on Diversity Learning Objectives establishes the four Diversity Learning Objectives as a collective addendum to the ULOs.

AS-676-09 Resolution on United States Cultural Pluralism Requirement revises the USCP criteria to make the criteria simpler, broader, and more reflective of more recent changes to the DLOs and the Cal Poly Statement on Diversity.

## CURRENT USCP CRITERIA

USCP courses must focus on *all* of the following:

- CR1: One or more diverse groups, as defined in the [Cal Poly Statement on Diversity](#)\*, whose contributions to contemporary American society have been impeded by cultural conflict or restricted opportunities;
- CR2: Contemporary social issues resulting from conflict or restricted opportunities, including, but not limited to, problems associated with discrimination based on age, ethnicity, gender, nationality, abilities, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or race;
- CR3: Critical thinking skills used by students to approach these contemporary social issues, examine their own attitudes, and consider the diverse perspectives of others;
- CR4: The contributions of people from diverse groups to contemporary American society.

In addition to satisfying these criteria, USCP courses must also address the [Diversity Learning Objectives](#).

## CAL POLY STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY

At Cal Poly we believe that academic freedom, a cornerstone value, is exercised best when there is understanding and respect for our diversity of experiences, identities, and world views. Consequently, we create learning environments that allow for meaningful development of self-awareness, knowledge, and skills alongside attention to others who may have experiences, worldviews, and values that are different from our own. In so doing, we encourage our students, faculty, and staff to seek out opportunities to engage with others who are both similar and different from them, thereby increasing their capacity for knowledge, empathy, and conscious participation in local and global communities.

In the spirit of educational equity, and in acknowledgement of the significant ways in which a university education can transform the lives of individuals and communities, we strive to increase the diversity at Cal Poly. As an institution that serves the state of California within a global context, we support the recruitment, retention, and success of talented students, faculty, and staff from across all societies, including people who are from historically and societally marginalized and underrepresented groups.

Cal Poly is an inclusive community that embraces differences in people and thoughts. By being open to new ideas and showing respect for diverse points of view, we support a climate that allows all students, faculty, and staff to feel valued, which in turn facilitates the recruitment and retention of a diverse campus

population. We are a culturally invested university whose members take personal responsibility for fostering excellence in our own and others' endeavors. To this end, we support an increased awareness and understanding of how one's own identity facets (such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, social class, and nation of origin) and the combinations of these identities and experiences that may accompany them can affect our different worldviews.

**\*NOTE:** According to AS-807-15's Cal Poly's Statement on Diversity & Inclusivity, it notes: "The definition of diversity is specifically inclusive of, but not limited to, and [sic] individual's race/ethnicity, sex/gender, socioeconomic status, cultural heritage, disability, and sexual orientation" (Adopted: November 17, 2015).

**ACADEMIC SENATE  
of  
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY  
San Luis Obispo, CA**

**AS-676-09**

**RESOLUTION ON  
UNITED STATES CULTURAL PLURALISM REQUIREMENT**

1     **Background:** The success of our country hinges on the productive interaction among the  
2     different people who make up our American society. Our educational system should be a  
3     catalyst for this interaction. Our state universities should create an environment in which  
4     every student is educated with respect to the pluralism of our society. Cal Poly’s  
5     academic programs should reflect this goal. The broadening of our U.S. Cultural  
6     Pluralism (USCP) requirement will promote this objective.  
7

8     The intent of this requirement is to expose all Cal Poly students to people different from  
9     themselves; and to social ideas and cultural norms that differ from their own. This  
10    requirement should not be onerous. Courses meeting this requirement should also count  
11    toward a student’s General Education, Support, or Major requirements. The ability to  
12    “double count” is encouraged. Concurrently we encourage all programs to incorporate  
13    attention to diversity in their courses where appropriate, and not rely solely on the USCP  
14    requirement to meet both their students’ needs and the University Diversity Learning  
15    Objectives.  
16

17    How different does the content of these courses have to be? We know what we intend,  
18    but it is difficult to put our intention into words. This requirement is an improvement  
19    over the existing USCP requirement in that it allows more differences to qualify, but we  
20    intend them to be significant differences. We do not intend for the requirement to be so  
21    broad as to be meaningless, and we hope that the material learned by students is different  
22    from what they have learned in their previous formal and informal education.  
23

24    WHEREAS,    The United States Cultural Pluralism requirement was approved in  
25                concept by Academic Senate resolution AS-361-91 in 1991 and  
26                established in 1992 by Academic Senate resolution AS-395-92; and  
27

28    WHEREAS,    The courses proposed to meet this requirement had to emphasize one of  
29                four “U.S. Cultures: Asian American, African American, Hispanic  
30                American, American Indian;” and

**Resolution AS-676-09**  
Adopted: February 10 2009

31           WHEREAS, Since 1992 the USCP Subcommittee, the Academic Senate Curriculum  
32                           Committee, the Academic Senate leadership, and others on campus  
33                           interested in diversity have recognized that this list is limiting; and  
34  
35           WHEREAS, It is now recognized that diversity in America is much broader than is  
36                           currently represented by the USCP requirement; and  
37  
38           WHEREAS, Over the past year the Senate Curriculum Committee has taken input from  
39                           a large number of individuals and groups interested in educating our  
40                           students about diversity; and  
41  
42           WHEREAS, The Senate Curriculum Committee has written a new set of criteria for the  
43                           USCP requirement with the agreement and enthusiastic support of these  
44                           individuals and groups that reflects the Diversity Learning Objectives  
45                           approved in Senate resolution AS-663-08; therefore be it  
46  
47           RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of Cal Poly adopt the attached “Criteria for  
48                           United States Cultural Pluralism (USCP) Courses” as a replacement for  
49                           the current criteria, effective immediately.

Proposed by: Academic Senate Curriculum Committee  
Date:           December 21 2008  
Revised:       January 20 2009

**Resolution AS-676-09**  
Adopted: February 10 2009

### **CRITERIA FOR UNITED STATES CULTURAL PLURALISM (USCP) COURSES**

USCP courses must focus on all of the following:

- ▶ One or more diverse groups, as defined in the Cal Poly Statement on Diversity, whose contributions to contemporary American society have been impeded by cultural conflict or restricted opportunities, as stated in the Diversity Learning Objectives;
- ▶ Contemporary social issues resulting from cultural conflict or restricted opportunities, including, but not limited to, problems associated with discrimination based on age, ethnicity, gender, nationality, abilities, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or race;
- ▶ Critical thinking skills used by students to approach these contemporary social issues in a sensitive, responsible manner; examine their own attitudes; and consider the diverse perspectives of others;
- ▶ The contributions of people from diverse groups to contemporary American society.

## Background Material

### CURRENT USCP CRITERIA

1. Emphasis on one or more of these four U.S. cultures: Asian American, African American, Hispanic American, American Indian.

*(The USCP Committee has chosen to interpret "emphasis" as meaning 50% or more of the course content. This means that at a minimum one-half of the course content should focus on one or more of the four identified U.S. Cultures; up to one-half of the course can focus on other issues, topics, cultures and population groups.)*

2. Attention to general issues of gender, diversity, equity, ethnocentricity, and ethnicity; and the relationships to problems facing contemporary society, especially those resulting from racism, discrimination and cultural conflict.
3. Application of rigorous pedagogical, scholarly methods and standards as evidenced in substantive exams, reports, papers, and projects.
4. Attention to critical thinking skills which will allow students to address cultural, racial, and gender issues in a sensitive and responsible manner and to evaluate their own attitudes and those of others.



## Background Material

### THE CAL POLY STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY\*

At the heart of a university is the responsibility to provide 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 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 people, 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 co-curricular programs of the University. We must be dedicated to the principle of ensuring that all of our students routinely encounter diverse people, ideas, and experiences.

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 others” are challenged. Such personal interactions give 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 co-curricular 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 should 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.

Only through intellectual and first-hand personal exposure to diversity in its myriad forms--racial, ethnic, cultural, gender, geographic, socio-economic, 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.

## Background Material

### Academic Senate Curriculum Committee:

Name	Department	College/Unit
Brown, Johanna	Library	Library
Conn, David	AcadAff	Admin
Dong, Kevin	ArchEngr	CAED
Fryer, Stuart	AcadRec	Admin
Griffin, Lanny	BioMed/GE	CENG
Hannings, David (CH)	Horti/CS	CAFES
Herter, Roberta	GrdSt/Ed	COE
Jensen, Kay	AcadProg	---
Machamer, Josh	Theatr/Dn	CLA
Mueller, James	Math	CSM
Opava, Susan	R&GP Dean	Admin
Spradlin, Wendy	CLA Advr	PCS
Thoma, Jennifer	AcadRec	---
Villegas, Dan	Econ	CBUS
Whiteford, Mary	AcadRec	---
Spak, Kaitlin	Student	ASI
VACANT		CAFES

### USCP Criteria Distribution List:

Mary Armstrong	Chair, Women's and Gender Studies
Terry Jones +	Chair, Social Sciences
John Snetsinger +	Former Chair, History
Don Ryujin* +	Acting Chair, Ethnic Studies
Andrew Morris* +	Chair, History
John Soares +	Chair, Academic Senate
Linda Halisky +	Dean, CLA
Debra Valencia-Laver +	Associate Dean, CLA
Angela Kramer +	President, ASI
Doug Keeseey +	Director, GE
Camille O'Bryant +	Head, Kinesiology
Kathryn Rummell* +	Chair, English
Bruno Giberti +	Past Chair, Senate

\* These people solicited input from individuals in their departments with USCP expertise.

+ These people responded

### The document was also circulated to:

John Battenburg, Director for International Education and Programs  
 The Diversity Learning Objectives Assessment Committee+  
 ASI Board of Directors (25 members)+

# Background Material

## **DIVERSITY LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

All Students who complete an undergraduate or graduate program at Cal Poly should be able to make reasoned decisions based on a respect and appreciation for diversity as defined in the Cal Poly Statement on Diversity, which is included in the catalog. They should be able to:

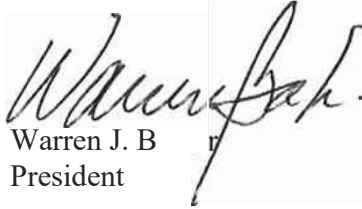
1. Demonstrate an understanding of relationships between diversity, inequality, and social, economic, and political power both in the United States and globally
2. Demonstrate knowledge of contributions made by individuals from diverse and/or underrepresented groups to our local, national, and global communities
3. Consider perspectives of diverse groups when making decisions
4. Function as members of society and as professionals with people who have ideas, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that are different from their own

*Academic Senate Resolution AS-663-08, approved by President Baker March 24, 2008*

State of California

**Memorandum**SAN LUIS OBISPO  
CA 93407To: John Soares  
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: February 23, 2009

From: Warren J. B  
PresidentCopies: R. Koob, D. Conn,  
P. Bailey, D. Christy,  
L. Halisky, T. Jones,  
B. Konopak, M. Noori,  
D. Wehner, K. IkedaSubject: Response to Academic Senate Resolution AS-676-09  
Resolution on United States Cultural Pluralism Requirement

I am pleased to approve the above-entitled resolution endorsing a change in the campus criteria for United States Cultural Pluralism Courses. The new criteria provide more curricular flexibility and incorporate the campus Diversity Learning Objectives.

Please extend my appreciation to members of the Curriculum Committee for their efforts in this regard.



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Dustin Stegner

**Date:** January 16, 2020

**From:** Jeffery D. Armstrong

**Copies:** Mary Pedersen  
Jozi De Leon  
Amy Fleischer  
Andy Thulin  
Christine Theodoropoulos  
Dean Wendt  
Philip Williams  
Gary Laver  
Cem Sunata

**Subject:** Response to AS-883-19 Resolution on Updating the United States Cultural Pluralism (USCP)

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This memo reflects my endorsement of the revised United States Cultural Pluralism criteria as outlined in the above-entitled Academic Senate resolution. In addition to addressing the Diversity Learning Objectives, these revisions provide alignment with the definition of *diversity* provided in Cal Poly's Statement on Diversity and Inclusivity.

Please express my appreciation to the General Education Governance Board, the Office of University Diversity & Inclusion and the Academic Senate members for their efforts in this regard.