

Dean's Office Special Initiatives EXITO

4+1 Ethnic Studies Initiative for Teacher Training Programs in Ethnic and Gender Studies (S.H. Park, R. Rios, I. Casillas, D. Fujino, T. Wooten, L. Oaks)

The 4+1 program is a combined BA/MA program for highly motivated students to earn a bachelor's degree in an Ethnic or Feminist studies department and, a Master's degree in Education and a teaching certificate in five years. The objective of this program is to train teachers of the highest caliber, with the skills to teach newly mandated Ethnic Studies courses, and in turn, contribute to fostering greater democratic participation and social relationships among our next generation. This new program would be the first of its kind in California.

A collaboration of the departments of Asian American Studies, Black Studies, Chicano/a Studies, Feminist Studies, the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education, along with the Office of Research at UCSB, this new teacher training program builds on the strengths of resources already existing on campus. In October of 2020, this effort received \$3 million over the next five years from the US Department of Education's Title V funding for Hispanic-Serving Institutions to create the infrastructure of this new initiative. Entitled, **Éxito: Educational eXcellence and Inclusion Training Opportunities**, this award supports: 1) development of new programming, resources, and research on Ethnic and Gender Studies; 2) enhancement of UCSB's Teacher Education Program; and, 3) production of core texts and related digital archives.

Across the nation, a growing number of school districts are mandating Ethnic and Gender studies courses as part of their regular curricular offerings. In California, the legislature passed the Alejo Bill in 2016, encouraging Ethnic Studies courses in all California public schools in grades 7 to 12. Currently, 7 out of 10 students in California public school system are ethnic minorities and yet the experiences and histories of these students remain largely marginal in their school curriculum. Studies show that Ethnic Studies courses have a positive impact on academic achievement through better attendance, increase in GPA, and more credits earned toward graduation (Dee & Penner 2016).

Students will benefit from this program by working towards their degrees in a supportive community with strong preparation for graduate school entrance exams, automatic admission to Gevirtz Graduate School of Education after successful completion of undergraduate program, financial assistance to offset expenses related to graduate school attendance, and workforce opportunities in the teaching profession. And, in developing a training program, model curricula, and an interdisciplinary research effort in identifying best practices in teaching Ethnic and Feminist Studies in secondary school contexts, this academic initiative has the potential to not only bring about positive

change for UCSB campus but also the state of California and the nation.

Currently, the primary funding priority for this initiative is to secure graduate scholarships to fully support students in this program. The federal Dept. of Education grant does not allow direct support of graduate student tuition and fees – which amounts to approximately \$40k per student. We are actively seeking private sources to augment the public funds received.

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