

1. History of Intercultural Studies at De Anza College

Origins of the Ethnic Studies Division

The origins of Intercultural Studies began in 1969 at De Anza, with the establishment of Ethnic Studies as an interdisciplinary division (1). Amidst the nation's ongoing struggle with racial equity and justice late in the civil rights movement, the college was intent on giving visibility and status to De Anza's Ethnic Studies programs by gathering all such courses into their own division (2).

At the time, De Anza President, Dr. A. Robert DeHart, urged the college to create the Ethnic Studies division, recognizing the importance of such courses in leading to a major, an A.A. degree, and general education courses that "will emphasize contributions of racial and ethnic groups to this country and the world." Rather than leaving individual divisions to develop their own courses relevant to Ethnic Studies, DeHart underscored, "We think it takes extra emphasis and thrust" (3). This thinking was foundational to the creation of the Ethnic Studies division.

Urgency and Imperative of Ethnic Studies

Importantly, Dr. DeHart elaborated on the educational urgency and imperative of Ethnic Studies: "Institutionalized racism definitely exists, and we hope that a full ethnic [studies] division will attack this by exposing white students to other cultures." The District Board of Trustees further affirmed that "it is becoming more and more evident that the mainstream culture also needs a program that will help them understand, appreciate, and accept the contributions minority cultures have made in this country." When the Ethnic Studies division opened in the fall of 1969, it was expected that 80 percent of the students taking the courses offered by the division would be racially identified as white, reflective of the student body demographics of the time.

De Anza's Leadership on Ethnic Studies

In many ways, De Anza's leadership in trailblazing for Ethnic Studies has been unique. The earliest universities to institutionalize Ethnic Studies--San Francisco State College and University of California, Berkeley--were prompted by large-scale and prolonged student demands.

De Anza, founded in 1967, decided to establish the Ethnic Studies division only two years later, and without the demand made by student protests. To this day, few, if any community colleges across the United States, have an Ethnic Studies academic division.

2. Intercultural Studies Today

Intercultural Studies Departments

Today, De Anza's Intercultural Studies departments continue the urgent and imperative work that began with the founding of the Ethnic Studies division. These departments include:

- African American Studies
- Asian American and Asian Studies
- Chicanx and Latinx Studies
- Native American Studies
- Women's Studies
- comparative ethnic studies

The Intercultural/International Studies division continues to give visibility and status to De Anza's Ethnic Studies. Intercultural Studies departments continue the attack on institutionalized racism through its A.A. degree and general education courses that engage all students in examining their racialized positions and subjectivities in complex and inequitable hierarchies of power in the United States and beyond. Intercultural Studies, with the more recent inclusion of Women's and Gender Studies programs, offers Certificates of Achievement in Asian American Studies (beginning fall 2020), Intercultural Studies, and Women's Studies.

Today's Student Demographics

Notably, the student body demographics of De Anza have changed since the founding of the Ethnic Studies division. This shift compels Intercultural Studies to recognize that students of color--those historically marginalized by race and ethnicity in the United States--are now the large majority of students to enroll in its classes.

Critically, Intercultural Studies departments support and challenge these students in their intellectual, academic, and educational pursuits by engaging them in an Ethnic Studies curriculum that is conventionally absent from primary and secondary schools across the U.S. A research review of Ethnic Studies curricula published by the National Education Association in 2011 reported that:

Ethnic studies curricula are supported by a body of research documenting the relationship between racial/ethnic identity of students of color and academic achievement. Studies using different research methodologies, investigating students at middle school through university levels, in different regions of the U.S. consistently find a

relationship between academic achievement, high level of awareness of race and racism, and positive identification with one's own racial group (4).

Curricular and Civic Role of Intercultural Studies

In short, the Intercultural Studies departments at De Anza serve a critical curricular and civic role in the education of all students, with a unique and deep history animated by the necessities of a society still grappling with widespread and entrenched forms of racial inequity and injustice.

Courses offered in the Intercultural Studies departments analyze systemic forms of oppression and address the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, and other forms of social identity that have been historically deployed in creating systems of hierarchy in the U.S. and beyond.

The Intercultural Studies departments recognize the validity of multiple paradigms in the construction of knowledge, and encourage the integrated study of all aspects of the human experience. A deep philosophical commitment to self-determination is reflected in student-centered pedagogies and civic engagement opportunities that promote creative thinking about ways to combat social problems and disparities. Importantly, Intercultural Studies departments affirm comparative and interdisciplinary approaches to a vision of social justice focused on eliminating inequalities driven by racism and sexism.

Footnotes:

1. "Ethnic Studies Opens for Business," *La Voz*, September 22, 1969: p. 3.
2. "Ethnic Studies to be New Division," *La Voz*, February 28, 1969: p. 1.
3. "Ethnic Studies to be New Division," *La Voz*, February 28, 1969: p. 1.
4. "The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies: A Research Review," Christine E. Sleeter. National Education Association, 2011: p. 8.

3. Criteria for Courses to be Counted Toward Fulfilling the ICS Requirement

Courses that fulfill the ICS requirement include:

1. ICS courses, and/or
2. Courses that are newly proposed by Intercultural Studies departments or courses that are revised by Intercultural Studies departments which did not previously fulfill the ICS requirement, and that:

- A. emphasize comparative analyses of the history and contemporary issues and positions of people of color within the United States and beyond, informed by the historically defined racialized core groups: Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and Latinx and Chicanx;
 - B. develop research capabilities of students to compile and analyze information from the perspectives of marginalized communities of color and in recognition of the conditions of dominant culture;
 - C. teach with a focus on the theoretical centrality and multidimensionality of racism, sexism, power, institutions in relation to the practice of advocating for social equity and justice; and
 - D. offer students an opportunity for direct engagement with the community
3. Courses that are cross-listed with those outlined in #1 and #2

4. Proposed Approval Process

Certification of courses for fulfilling the ICS requirement will involve review and approval by the chair of the specific Intercultural Studies department in which it is proposed, the Dean of Intercultural/International Studies (IIS), and the Curriculum Committee.

Approval by the chair of the respective Intercultural Studies department and the Dean of the IIS Division will be communicated to the Curriculum Committee for its review and certification.