



DIVISION OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES
OFFICE OF THE DEAN
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Dean's Division Statement on IPBT Tuesday, June 2, 2020 4PM

Good Afternoon and thank you for allowing me to join all of you here at IPBT, to speak briefly about the Social Sciences and Humanities Division.

My name is Elvin Ramos and I am the new Dean for the Division. I started my tour of duty on April 1st and since then I have had the opportunities to learn quickly from faculty colleagues like you, students, fellow Deans, and members of the senior staff – noting specifically, Lorrie and Christina.

While every transition takes time, especially starting my deanship at home, I took the liberty these past two months to learn, intensely, the vibrant academic programs, partners, and individuals that makes up the Division.

Our division includes nine disciplines: Anthropology, Economics, Geography, History, Humanities, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology and Sociology.

In addition, our professional and career training programs are Administration of Justice, Child Development/Education, and Paralegal Studies.

The division also works in collaboration with the California History Center, which serves as a partner in our community and in our college.

We are composed of:

25 Full Time Faculty and over 120 Part Time Faculty Members

All are committed to student success, equity, and community engagements at various space and platforms in the college, as well as, the Bay Area Community at large.

When I first came in as Dean, I was asked what are my central vision for the division. I decided after talking to each department chairs, and faculty alike, that as their leader, I would move the division onward with an emphasis on being more Global, more Mindful, more Relevant, and doing more to expand our work in our neighboring Communities.

GLOBAL in a sense that our work in our disciplines, and teachings are not just confined locally but realizing that our curricula are enriched with diverse knowledge and information and that they complement school of ideas and practices around the world.

MINDFULNESS in a sense that our practice should align with the college's vision in regards to inclusion and understanding the very needs, to address the well-being of ourselves and others.

RELEVANCY in sense that we must preach what we teach and to assure our disciplines are interconnected in what had happened in the past, what is happening now, and what is going to happen in the future especially in the nature of social justice and change.

COMMUNITY in a sense of belonging, outreach, and ultimately helping our students and our work to be more recognized in our neighborhoods, cities, and ultimately gain the opportunity to enlarge and extend the classroom experience.

The Social Sciences and Humanities faculty guild, as many of you know, are well engaged on campus with our students and colleagues- they are involved with organizations, associations, institutions in other cities and at the state level. They are known to be change agents, advocates, experts, and activists in their own right. Our faculty members are scientists who study aspects of our societies, human relationships, human behaviors, cultures, environment and in principle, how we influence the world around us.

During this pandemic lockdown that started in March, which brought everyone remotely, I can tell all of you that, just like many of us here, our faculty colleagues in the Division definitely underwent hardship to mobilize themselves to go online; they were stressed with health and family matters; all ...while trying to scramble to study the consequences and pain of the pandemic in real time.

But, none of these prevented them to stop. They were present enough to know what is right and they were encouraged by the college leadership's empathy to go on, make mistakes, and take the chance to invent and improvise.

By the end of April, after conducting our own division survey, thanks to our Admin Assistant, Leslie, we found that almost 80% of our faculty full time and part time were getting used to settling in the virtual world. There's this spider-web like bridge bringing people together that is happening at De Anza and truthfully, it has it has triggered and influenced the departments of SSH.

But our work is not over. Our students deserve more.

- I hear from faculty day after day, how they are responding to the needs of our students;

- I hear from faculty, how they too, made a mistake on Canvas that day, and will fix it, so students can better access such materials or resources.
- I hear from faculty that in addition to teach their course topics, the relevancy of the issues and concerns of our society today must be frontloaded in their daily class discussions to help our student navigate and form an essence of belonging, courage, and acceptance.
- I hear from faculty, that they are retooling their old ways to better serve our students emotional well-being;
- I hear from faculty that this struggle is real from both ends.

The truth is, the Division of Social Sciences and Humanities cannot, and will not ignore the causes of the pandemic, which includes consequences, such as the budget crisis we are going to face in the college. And because of this, we are mindful to be content of what we have, and we will appreciate what we get.

In closing, the Division will also not stand back and will actively continue our contribution to the urgent discussions; resolutions; and collaborative reforms that needs to happen, to fuel the call of action we need to achieve to overcome this pandemic as a college; and to fight the racism happening in our cities, our states, and our country.

These are all real in our disciplines and we are all invested, in order to have a safer campus, a protected online-environment, solid individual cultural awareness, intentional continuity and change and finally, as part of the De Anza's holistic community... reminding each other to take care of ourselves, and to comfort each other with hope.

Thank you.