
To: bc_curriculum@bakersfieldcollege.edu

Wed 10/19/2022 3:00 PM

Bakersfield College:Curriculum Director:

I understand that History Professor Oliver Rosales has proposed a series of courses in leadership that would encompass the history of the California central valley. This would be an outstanding addition to the studies at BC as many first generation students & others would value courses. Visits to locations of the historical events & classroom education about the labor movement, including leaders like Delores Huerta & Cesar Chavez, would be welcomed by many in the community. I hope the college decides to go ahead with the courses.

Kim Perales

To: bc_curriculum@bakersfieldcollege.edu

Wed 10/19/2022 4:58 PM

October 19, 2022

Bakersfield College Academic Curriculum Committee
Kern Community College District

Members of the Curriculum Committee:

I am writing as Chief Administrative Officer and as a National Vice President of the United Farm Workers of America. In addition, I am a product of the Kern Community College District, having attended both Porterville and Bakersfield Colleges before transferring to California State University, Bakersfield, where I graduated with honors in business administration with a concentration in accounting. My parents worked in the fields for most of my childhood. Their highest priority was that their children focus on education. My sister graduated from the University of California, San Diego.

It is my privilege to serve as a board member of the Bakersfield College Foundation and as Vice Chair of the California State University Bakersfield Foundation. Our family is committed to both institutions and has made financial commitments to both institutions. We are committed to ensuring students feel our local institutions celebrate the diversity and contributions of all.

Cesar Chavez and his union comprise the most historic national movement ever to come out of Kern County. This very modest non-credited course—"Landmarks in California History" and "Cesar E. Chavez Leadership Certificate of Completion"—would introduce students to that farm worker movement. It isn't even a drop in the bucket in contrast to the hundreds of millions of dollars California's most prestigious educational institutions such as the University of California annually spend to directly benefit the agricultural industry.

As a product of the local educational system and as a community leader, I strongly support these courses and urge you to approve them. Let's continue to support dialogue and provide local students the pride of knowing they are tied to a rich local history we all can be proud of.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Connie Perez-Andreesen

To: bc_curriculum@bakersfieldcollege.edu

Wed 10/19/2022 10:11 PM

Dear Curriculum Committee of the Academic Senate at Bakersfield College,

I am now a retired professor of sociology from your sister Bakersfield college, CSUB. For over 30 years I developed and taught some of courses on the Latino and Indigenous experiences in the United States. I also taught the general survey course on race & ethnic relations in the core curriculum, as well as developed the sole course on the sociology of immigration. I'd like to respectfully make two broad observations that ought to give you pause on turning down the proposed curriculum for two non-credit courses proposed by my esteemed colleague Dr. Oliver Rosales, focused on the farm workers' historical experiences in our agricultural region:

1. There is, indeed, an historic debt to our area's multiethnic agricultural communities, consisting of the woeful neglect and indifference on the part of our entire educational systems – from our K-12 school districts to our two sister

institutions of higher education -, to teach the rich and complex history of farm workers in the Southern San Joaquin area, their current conditions, and the enormous challenges they continue to face.

Recent breakthroughs in developing agricultural science, engineering, and administration in both our colleges are commendable but are clearly not enough. For one thing, they benefit mostly the business side of our agricultural economy, while our social sciences, compartmentalized in the traditional departments, continue to lag behind or are simply remiss in teaching about, and to, our local rural working-class communities. That imbalance needs addressing.

Recently, my university has begun to remedy this longstanding omission by creating an ethnic studies department. It's only a beginning, and much work lies ahead to make our history and social science curricula be truly relevant, meaningful, and useful to our diverse student body in a democratic society. But we at CSUB are already moving forward – faculty, administrators, and community – with newly found vigor and commitment to our core educational mission.

Your Academic Senate and your Curriculum Committee should be encouraging – not blocking - the development of innovative curricula and programs to help remedy your longstanding deficits in this area as well, working alongside your Administration, your faculty, and yes, your community. Much work lies ahead if you embark along this new course of action, but embark you must if you hope to remain a vital institution of higher learning, accountable in the last instance to our vibrant and diverse society.

A minimum first step would be for you to discuss, improve upon as is your professional task, and enthusiastically approve Dr. Oliver Rosales's very modest proposal for a non-credit, two-course certification program on the history and legacy of our local farmworkers struggles. I would not presume to advise you on how to improve his modest but promising proposal, but I would strongly advise you not to simply turn it down – that would be a terrible mistake that would send a message to your students and our communities that you remain conspicuously

aloof from - if not hostile to - their true long-term educational needs, for so long denied; educational needs which, I submit, have never been *solely* about technical knowledge and skills.

2. The specific context to the present orchestrated effort to deny Dr. Rosales's curriculum proposal, supported by the BC administration and overwhelming Latino student body, is that you have on your campus an organized group of socially conservative white faculty that I would characterize as ideologically hostile to *all but the minimal* multicultural education, which is their right to advocate for, but not to the point of blocking those in the vast majority of Californians that support it. Their loud and strident denunciation of Dr. Rosales's very modest proposal and attempt to block it entirely did not spring from thin air.

For one thing, we live in a notoriously conservative region with a history of racism and xenophobia. For another, there is today across the nation – and B.C. is now smack in the middle of it – an emboldened counteroffensive on the part of the same social forces that fought tooth and nail against the multicultural gains of the past six decades that has come out of the woodwork in the past decade or so with renewed virulence and open calls to roll back said gains. I'm referring to the so-called MAGA movement and the huge conservative mass media ecosystem that feeds it. Today this toxic environment is whipping up a wholly manufactured hysteria against liberal education, attacking innumerable school district boards against their alleged collusion to teach so-called "Critical Race Theory", "Marxist indoctrination," "Socialism", and "grooming sexual deviance" to their children.

All of it is patently false, but that does not matter. As sociologist W. I. Thomas memorably put it, "*if a person perceives a situation as real, it is real in its consequences.*" We in academia must deal with this false perception of the state of our educational systems methodically planted in the heads of millions of consumers of rightwing media, and the many followers of political demagogues. This ominous and potent return to what historian Richard Hofstadter famously described *the 'paranoid style of American politics'* can be adequately explained by our social science, but here I merely want state the obvious, that it has

unfortunately already appeared on your campus; and that any misguided effort on your broader faculty and administration to appease it will only sow further regression and inevitable social conflict. For people of color are not going to quietly cede their gains to these deluded white colleagues in our midst just because they are deathly afraid of being “replaced” by a vast conspiracy against them.

As past eras of national paranoia have demonstrated, this latest bout of racist paranoia needs to be confronted by all of us non-Trumpists, exposed for what it is, and defeated in the halls of academia, in the mass media, and in the political arena. We – and I mean all academics and people of all backgrounds with good will - should therefore work together on this major challenge in the immediate period ahead. Academia is not above society, but is in society and must serve society – all of it, not just a part of it.

There is certainly a place for legitimate and robust academic debate over the pros and cons of any curriculum proposal, and faculty has a unique responsibility to make sure these proposals are sound academically, but what you are dealing with here is much more than a mere academic debate, it’s an egregious attack on multicultural education itself. Do not allow those faculty now organized to block any and all progress on developing a truly relevant, multicultural curriculum on your campus to sabotage your efforts to provide access and quality education to all.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gonzalo Santos

To: bc_curriculum@bakersfieldcollege.edu

Thu 10/20/2022 7:16 AM

Fw: Dr. Gonzalo Santos

And why would BC allow Matt Garrett and his tribe to pay out John Antonoros political fundraising leaflets on campus?

Kern County has a rich farm labor history. Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta were a great part of this movement.

What's wrong with toilets in the fields, fair wages, better working conditions, medical benefits and unemployment insurance for the people who earn their humble living by the sweat of their brows and put food on our table?

Matt Garrett's accusations are both foolhardy and tomfoolery. His cronies outrageous put-downs of students attending the Curriculum Meetings and classified employees having input is an affront to all of us.

This smacks of the days when Kern County banned John Steinbeck's classic novel "Grapes of Wrath" in our public libraries and schools.

It also brings to mind the importance of academic freedom.

I urge your Committee to approve forthwith the two courses that the very able Professor Oliver A Rosales has developed.

Mark C, Salvaggio

To: bc_curriculum@bakersfieldcollege.edu

Thu 10/20/2022 7:47 AM

For many students the college years are a unique time to explore diverse histories/viewpoints before life becomes focused on career and raising children.

I was shocked to read that Bakersfield College is considering not offering proposed elective non-credit courses with field trips focused on the unique history of the struggle to organize farm workers in Kern county, i.e. "Landmarks in California History" and "César E. Chávez Leadership Certificate of Completion."

College students should have a range of courses to choose what they want to learn more about. Limiting the curriculum to only non-controversial topics is a disservice to students and the reputation of Bakersfield College.

Respectfully submitted by

Mary Mecartney

To: bc_curriculum@bakersfieldcollege.edu

Thu 10/20/2022 9:26 AM

Re: Dr. Gonzalo Santos

Well said.

Ned E. Dunphy

To: bc_curriculum@bakersfieldcollege.edu

Thu 10/20/2022 9:56 AM

Dear Bakersfield College Academic Senate,

I am a college educator in Kern and advocate for ethnic studies. I have worked in various capacities and positions throughout Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Kern, serving students in Arvin, Lamont, Shafter, and Bakersfield. **I want to ask that you VOTE YES to implement the Cesar E. Chavez Leadership course.** Students want to learn this history. Many of their parents work in the fields. Courses like this provide greater context for our students to understand our society and how to better serve our community. It also teaches our students the importance of civic engagement and that everyone can create a humanizing society that serves all living beings. This course will attract students to your campus and can serve all students, regardless of their social, political, or economic background.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,
Rebecca Romero