ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE ARIZONA STATE BOOK CHALLENGE IN THE TUCSON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Submitted by thoughtful and committed students and the AS VP for Governmental Affairs, Iris Maute-Gibson

WHEREAS, Western Washington University (WWU) "serves the people of the State of Washington, the nation, and the world by bringing together individuals of diverse backgrounds and perspectives in an inclusive, student-centered university that develops the potential of learners and the well-being of communities," as is outlined in the University's mission statement; and

WHEREAS we find that WWU's vision parallels the pursuits of Tucson Unified School District's (TUSD) Mexican American Studies Program (MAS) in that the MAS Program's model includes the following components:
- "A counter-hegemonic curriculum."
- "Student-teacher interactions centered on authentic caring"
And offers students "Social and academic scaffolds to increase student success"

WHEREAS, the vision of WWU is to "build a stronger Washington by being an international leader in active learning, critical thinking, and societal problem solving;" and

WHEREAS the pursuits of TUSD's Social Justice Education Project (SJEP) provides its students with:
  - "Academic rigor"
  - "The opportunity to develop a critical consciousness"
And engages in the pursuit of promoting and advocating for "Social and educational transformation."

"WHEREAS, The Tucson Unified School District (TUSD), in compliance with The State of Arizona Revised Statutes Sections 15-111 and 15-112, had to eliminate its Mexican American Studies (MAS) Program, resulting in the subsequent removal of textbooks and books on the MAS Program Reading List;" and

WHEREAS, culturally relevant curriculum that embody this country's rich diverse history can no longer be taught or prepared by teachers in the suspended MAS Program; and

WHEREAS, "SJEP students' graduation rates (about 95%) exceeded those of Anglo students (about 84%) in the site(s) where the program was offered" and students in the TUSD MAS Program are "entering college at a rate of 80%;" and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Standards for Teacher Certification, by which Woodring students abide, dictates that teacher candidates "show the knowledge and skills for effective teaching by:
  - Designing and/or adapting challenging curriculum that is based on the diverse needs of each student...
  - Demonstrating cultural sensitivity in teaching and in relationships with students, families, and community members...
  - Informing, involving, and collaborating with families and community members as partners in each student's educational process...
...A successful candidate for the professional certificate shall demonstrate professional contributions to the improvement of the school, community, and the profession by:
• Advocating for curriculum, instruction, and learning environments that meet the diverse needs of each student; and
• Participating collaboratively in school improvement activities and contributing to collegial decision making."

WHEREAS, the Associated Students Board of Directors (ASBOD) seeks to
• "Foster students' rights and responsibilities"
• "Promote the general welfare of students"
• "Establish channels of communication within the University"
• "Represent student interests and opinions to the University Administration, Board of Trustees, and appropriate governmental agencies"; and therefore

WHEREAS, these missions are all in alignment with those of the MAS Program and the SJEP in Arizona State:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Associated Students of Western Washington University stand in support of the students of the TUSD who oppose this violation of their right to education

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that the AS of WWU oppose the additions to the Arizona House Bill 2281

IN ADDITION, BE IT RESOLVED that the AS of WWU support the Mexican American Studies program based on increased graduation rates and increased college attendance numbers, and due to the fact that our university's values are in alignment with those of the SJEP and the MAS Program

FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the AS of WWU urge Washington Attorney General, Rob McKenna, to take a strong stance by writing a letter to Arizona Attorney General, Tom Thorne, expressing Washington State's opposition to the removal of Ethnic Studies programs and encouraging the immediate reimplementation of the MAS Curriculum and challenged literature.
Resolution Appendix


TUSD MAS Model: http://www.tusdl.org/contents/depart/mexicanam/model.asp

WWU Vision http://www.wwu.edu/president/strategicplan.shtml

TUSD SJEP Pursuits: http://www.tusdl.org/contents/depart/mexicanam/model.asp


*Basic Information:

In January, Arizona House Bill 2281 went into effect. The bill reads: "Public school pupils should be taught to treat and value each other as individuals and not be taught to resent other races or classes of people.” It prohibits courses that "promote the overthrow of the U.S. government; promote resentment toward a race or class of people; are designed primarily for pupils of a particular ethnic group; [and] advocate ethnic solidarity instead of the treatment of pupils as individuals.” The targeted group is Mexican-American students, and thus the Mexican American Studies (MAS) Program has been challenged in the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD). On January 13th, 2012, any books dealing with issues of race were removed from the TUSD, and the MAS program has been legally disallowed in all Arizona State public schools.
Timeline of Major Events in the Ethnic Studies Struggle

May 11, 2010: HB2281 passed by legislature and signed by Governor Brewster

October 18, 2010: Suit filed against Tom Horne for violation of student and teacher rights (ongoing).

January 1, 2011: Tom Horne found TUSD in violation of HB 2281 (60 days for MAS to comply).

May 2, 2011: Superintendent Huppenthal orders the Cambium Audit, to assess if MAS curriculum abides by state standards. The Audit finds that MAS is within the law.


June 2011-Present: MAS students and teachers repeal AZ law and file a suit against Senator John Huppenthal

December 27, 2011: Judge Kowal rules in favor of Huppenthal.

January 10, 2012: Governing school board votes 4-1 to suspend "all MAS courses and teaching activities, regardless of funding source."

January 11, 2012: Students walk out in protest.

January 18, 2012: School officials come into classrooms and force teachers to remove books. They are boxed and sent to the book repository.

January 23, 2012: 400 students walk out of school to protest

January 24, 2012: Student protests continue. Students gather outside schools to learn Mexican American History.

Currently, students are still participating in walk outs and Congressperson, Raul Grijalva, whose wife is the only school board member who voted against the removal of the MAS, is in DC working with the Mexican American Caucus to prove that HB 2281 is a civil rights violation.
WHEREAS, The Center for Education, Equity, and Diversity (CEED) aims "to support the Woodring College of Education in its commitment to an education that promotes cultural understanding and social justice in a pluralistic, democratic society. The Center focuses on issues related to equity, diversity, self-exploration and identity, inter-group relations, multicultural education and democratic empowerment and civic engagement; particularly focusing on issues of retention and success for historically underrepresented populations. The mission and goals of the Center are based on the belief that all children and adults can learn and develop in a psychologically supportive and culturally affirming environment. The Center is committed to an intercultural dialogue that will lead to a vision of the kind of sustainable community we want to create with the next generation;" and

WHEREAS, The Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano/a de Aztlán (MEChA), which played an important role in the creation and implementation of Chicana/o Studies and support services programs on campus, strives to achieve the following goals:

• Promotes higher education, cultura, and historia: MEChA was founded on the principles of self-determination for the liberation of our people. We believe that political involvement and education is the avenue for change in our society.

• Committed to ending the cultural tyranny suffered at the hands of institutional and systematic discrimination that holds our Gente captive. We seek an end to oppression and exploitation of the Chicano/Chicana community.

• We, Mechistas, commit ourselves to return to our community and contribute to the development of the Chicana/Chicano Nation; and

WHEREAS, The Ethnic Student Center (ESC), which "is a safe and supportive environment for historically underrepresented groups and allies while providing cultural and educational programs," helps "students in transitioning to Western, developing cultural identity, providing a sense of community, and being active in social justice. The ESC also offers study space, computer access, and resource information," and is open to all students; and

WHEREAS, Western's library supports and promotes learning, defined in their mission statement as "the promotion of critical thinking, and information literacy," and lists as core values the following:

• "We protect intellectual freedom and provide non-judgmental service."

• "We promote diversity and provide equal and open access;" and

WHEREAS, Woodring College of Education "fosters community relationships and a culture of learning that advance knowledge, embrace diversity, and promote social justice," which parallels the goals of the Social Justice Education Project (SJEP) and the Mexican American Studies Program (MAS);

WHEREAS, Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies defines itself by these five attributes:

• Interdisciplinary study

• Student-designed studies and evaluation of learning

® Examination of issues arising from a diverse society

• Development of leadership and a sense of social responsibility

• Curricular, instructional and evaluative innovation; and

WHEREAS, Western's Residential Communities are intentionally designed to actively engage
new freshmen and transfer students, returning students and international students" in learning "to become more responsible adults in diverse and inclusive communities that foster leadership, sustainability, social responsibility, and civic engagement;" and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Diversity in Higher Education Minor program, which is a jointly sponsored interdisciplinary minor of the American Cultural Studies Program (Fairhaven College) and the Student Affairs Administration Program (Woodring College), "is to prepare UG students with cultural knowledge and multicultural competencies required to address the vast and growing diversity of students entering higher education. From 1995 to 2005, there has been a 50% increase in ethnic student enrollment in higher education. The minor is open to all WWU students. It is especially designed for students considering careers and/or graduate school in higher education or in student affairs administration. Nine students were enrolled last year and 16 are enrolled this year;" and

WHEREAS, The American Cultural Studies (ACS) Program "is devoted to the interdisciplinary study of diversity in American society, providing students and faculty with opportunities to apply social and cultural theories to examine concepts such as race/ethnicity, social and cultural theory, social economic class, gender and sexual orientation, religions, and abilities while thinking about the formation of identities and societies over time."

WHEREAS, the missions are all in alignment with those of the MAS Program and the SJEP in Arizona State, we resolve to:*
Appendix to Mission Statements

CEED Mission Statement; http://www.wce.wwu.edu/Resources/CEP/AboutUs.shtml

MEChA Mission Statement: http://www.nationalmecha.org/

ESC Mission Statement: http://as.wwu.edu/esc/


Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies Mission: http://www.wwu.edu/fairhaven/about/mission.shtml


