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“YES on Diversity”: Three Decades of Asian American Student Activism for UCLA’s
Undergraduate Diversity Requirement

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts
in Asian American Studies

by

Nicole Ngaosi

2018

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2018

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

“YES on Diversity”: Three Decades of Asian American Student Activism for UCLA’s
Undergraduate Diversity Requirement

by

Nicole Ngaosi

Master of Arts in Asian American Studies

University of California, Los Angeles, 2018

Professor Victor Bascara, Chair

In accordance with the 1983 mandate from Assembly Constitutional Resolution 71 (ACR 71), the University of California was charged to incorporate a requirement in the Undergraduate General Education curriculum. To be inclusive of the experiences of people of color and those of women, the first proposals sought to implement an ethnic and gender studies requirement. Subsequent efforts to revisit the issue resurfaced as a proposal for a “Community and Conflict Requirement” to mask an overt diversity curriculum from more outspoken critics. The final version of the proposal passed under the title of the Diversity Requirement in 2015. Regardless of the public title, students and staff had mobilized to compel the university to adopt the requirement for all students to fulfill by graduation.

Between the 1980s and 2015, Asian American students at UCLA successfully organized

a campaign for the university to adopt an undergraduate diversity course requirement into the general education curriculum. Situated in the historical struggles for Ethnic Studies, the establishment of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center (AASC) in 1969, and the subsequent expansion of student-initiated retention and outreach programs, many of these students held formal and informal ties to the AASC and Asian American Studies Department at UCLA. This thesis explores the student organizing history for UCLA's Diversity Requirement with particular attention on the leadership roles of Asian American students. I find that Asian American students have been the most consistent advocates in this effort and have managed to evolve their organizing strategies as they continue to reinvent the movement for curricular reform according to their environment.

The thesis of Nicole Ngaosi is approved.

Mitchell J. Chang

Valerie J. Matsumoto

Victor Bascara, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2018

This project is dedicated to the reinventions of student advocacy.

For all students.

We weave like rivers passing through.

And pour ourselves into one body.

The fruits of our labors shine like jewels

At the bottom of an expansive lakebed.

These are our stories.

These are our legacies.

For Asian American Studies.

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ACRONYMS: UCLA AFFILIATED ENTITIES

AAC	Academic Affairs Commissioner
AAP	Academic Advancement Program
APALDP	Asian Pacific American Leadership Development Project
AASC	Asian American Studies Center
AASD	Asian American Studies Department
AISA	American Indian Student Association
APC	Asian Pacific Coalition
APLCC	Asian Pacific Languages and Cultures Committee
ASU	Afrikan Student Union
BU	Bruins United
CAPSA	Concerned Asian Pacific Students for Action (later Critical Asian Pacific Students for Action)
CDI	Student Advisory Board for the College Diversity Initiative
CPO	Community Programs Office
CRC	Campus Retention Committee
EVP	External Vice President
GALA	Gay Lesbian Alliance
IAC	Institute of American Cultures
LA!	Let's Act!
MEChA	Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán
MO	Mother Organizations
MSA	Muslim Student Association
PACTIES	Pacific Ties
PISA	Pacific Islands' Student Association
SF!	Students First!
SIOC	Student Initiated Outreach Center (formerly Student Initiated Access Center)
SP	Samahang Pilipino
SRC	Student Retention Center
VSU	Vietnamese Student Union (formerly Vietnamese Student Association)
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles
USAC	Undergraduate Students Association Council

A Brief Timeline of the Diversity Requirement

1983: Assemblywoman Teresa Hughes authors and passes ACR 71, ordering the UC to review its policies on ethnic experiences and to ensure that all graduates “possess an awareness and understanding of non-white ethnic groups.”

1985: Student-initiated campaign for an ethnic and gender studies requirement begins.

1987: UCLA Chancellor Charles E. Young endorses a proposal for an ethnic and gender studies requirement after the Lake Arrowhead conference on Affirmative Action and Ethnic Diversity.

1990: Proposal for an “Ethnic and Gender Studies Requirement” is rejected by UCLA Academic Senate.

1993: Proposal for an “Ethnic and Gender Studies Requirement” is presented to deans, department chairs, and Executive Committee for commentary. Proposal is rejected by Council on Undergraduate Education.

1997: Proposal for an “Ethnic and Gender Studies Requirement” loses momentum after being introduced to undergraduate student government.

2004: Proposal for a diversity requirement fails during College of Letters & Science faculty vote.

2012: Proposal for “Community and Conflict in the Modern World” fails during College of Letters & Science faculty vote.

2014: Proposal for the “Diversity Requirement” narrowly passes during College of Letters & Science faculty vote. Opposition faculty successfully call for an unprecedented campus-wide re-vote.

2015: Proposal for the “Diversity Requirement” overwhelmingly passes during campus-wide faculty re-vote.

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To Meg, Student Community Projects (S/CP) Coordinator, I extend insurmountable gratitude to for holding space for me throughout these five years, for your knowledge, patience, and keeping me rooted when my searches took me far from the ground.

To my research participants—Max Espinoza, Vy Nguyen, Bryant Tan, Layhannara Tep, Suza Khy, and Jazz Kiang—thank you for sharing your intimate thoughts and for going through this complex journey of memory with me—I am proud to be a small extended branch of our beautiful organizing tree.

Lastly, thank you to my student organizing comrades of the Asian Pacific Coalition, Asian American Pacific Islander Studies Undergraduate Association, and the Community Programs Office—I hold these memories and challenges quite closely to my heart—and wish you all well as we continue to extend our own branches into the world; but we remain rooted in one large legacy.

Introduction: “We Were Never Lazy, We Were Never Shy”

I think from what I learned from campus, all of the different campaigns, with Vy working on it years ago, learning about CAPSA, [and] the [Ethnic] Studies Centers and the [Asian American Studies] Department—Asian Americans have been involved [and] have been in the trenches. [They] have done the hard work to get things done. I always felt that we were never lazy, we were never shy.

- Suza Khy, on the role of Asian Americans in student organizing¹

Though not widely known, Asian American students have a rich legacy of activism at UCLA—reflected through permanent transformations that the university has undergone. From the birth of Ethnic Studies programs and research centers to the proposals of student-initiated retention and outreach services for students of color, advocacy undertaken by previous generations of Asian American students has left behind several spaces that continued to provide unique, educational development and holistic support on campus today. Perhaps principal amongst these moments of institutional change was the establishment of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center (AASC) and an interdepartmental academic program for Asian American Studies in 1969. In the ensuing years, however, Asian American students continue to advocate for curriculum change, most notably through a three-decade campaign for UCLA to adopt an undergraduate diversity course requirement through the Academic Senate.

Beginning formally in the 1980s and passing through UCLA’s Academic Senate in 2015 after multiple failed proposals, the College of Letters & Science Diversity Requirement remained a consistent objective maintained by multiple generations of Asian American students. This is a rare feat, as longstanding social movements have proven to be difficult to preserve and changing

¹ S. Khy, Interview, December 14, 2018.

circumstances in the external environment can generate interest elsewhere. For movements led by students, moreover, individuals' organizing capacity is limited to their relatively short tenure at college. And while students may participate in established membership groups with an activist history, organizational priorities can change from year to year. Thus, how did Asian American students remain committed to the Diversity Requirement campaign over a long period of time? How did they preserve and transmit institutional knowledge across generational temporalities? How did they develop the political organizing skills and leadership, despite being racially stereotyped as apolitical and apathetic?

Despite UCLA's national status as a public research institution, few studies have been conducted regarding some of its own institutional transformations, especially in the realm of diversity paradigms in higher education. This is rather disappointing because I believe there are numerous lessons that can emerge from historical analysis of student organizing efforts, particularly those that have led to the transformations that I have observed at UCLA. Sadly, documentation of student organizing efforts rarely exists aside from primary artifacts and fading memories of former students.

What is even less considered for these historical moments is the connection between Asian American Studies and Asian American students—many of whom assumed operative and strategy roles—either in the course of study or organizational affiliation (or both). While such initiatives required multiple years of planning, transition, and stewardship, in order to advance a progressive agenda and build capacity for people of color at UCLA, there is perhaps no effort in the past half-century that can compare to the longevity of student organizing for UCLA's undergraduate diversity course requirement. Beginning formally in the 1980s and passing successfully in the Academic Senate in 2015 after multiple failed proposals, the three-decade

effort to pass UCLA's College of Letters and Science Diversity Requirement is evidence of the intentional and indirect impact of Asian American Studies on Asian American students' ability to leverage power and pass on institutional knowledge. It is significant to note that efforts to transform UCLA's diversity curriculum occurred during a majority of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center's years of operation.

On-campus student organizations such as the Asian Pacific Coalition (APC)—historically housed and supported by the UCLA Asian American Studies Center—have played significant roles in challenging the university to move towards justice and equity, despite potential blowback from their perceived unpopular ideas at the time. Ironically, many of these efforts would later become accepted and integrated by UCLA in its messaging of campus values and achievements. There is perhaps little coincidence that APC was the most consistent organization to advocate for the Diversity Requirement, given its history of demanding justice during Professor Don Nakanishi's struggle for tenure and organizing student fee referendum campaigns to fund student-initiated retention and outreach programs. Further investigation of its leadership members reveals a critical mass across multiple student generations that have academically majored or minored in Asian American Studies.

This thesis will trace the affiliation between Asian American students and Asian American Studies. It will present a narrative timeline that links seemingly disconnected individuals with one another to highlight efforts to transform UCLA's diversity curriculum. Although a documented network of affiliated students may never be truly complete due to lost artifacts and faded memories, this thesis will analyze how the existence of Asian American Studies served as an institutional pillar for community engagement throughout the 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s. Rooted in the legacy of the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) and the

Ethnic Studies Strikes in the 1960s, the three-decade movement for an undergraduate diversity course requirement presents promising considerations of the role of organizational saga theory in reinventing social movements.

Like Rivers Passing through: Lack of Student Organizing Archival Research

Like rivers passing through, the stories of students run quickly through the university and seemingly end upon graduation. However, the tales of their organizing eventually pour into a large lake of student advocacy. The jewels of their contributions lie scattered like stones on a lakebed—memories of protest, of programming, and of advocacy that coalesce into one space. While easy to miss, I have sought to uncover these stories by sifting through the waters and the dirt. I have continually discovered that the enduring legacy of the UCLA College of Letters & Science Diversity Requirement is defined by its 30-year delay and the longevity of students' advocacy for it. This legacy has particularly struck me as the continuation of student organizing at UCLA after the late-1960s Ethnic Studies strikes at San Francisco State University and UC Berkeley.

During my tenure as an undergraduate student pursuing a bachelor's degree in Asian American Studies, I became involved in student organizing with the Asian Pacific Coalition—an umbrella organization comprised of more than 25 Asian Pacific Islander (API) student organizations on campus. From 2012-2013, I participated in their internship program and discussed contemporary issues impacting Asian Pacific Americans (APA) on campus, which supplemented lessons learned in my Asian American Studies courses. In 2013-2014, I served as APC's Academic Affairs Coordinator whose duty was to serve as the bridge between the Asian American Studies Center and Asian American Studies Department. My purpose was to concurrently Chair the Asian American Pacific Islands' Studies Undergraduate Association

(AAPIUA), which acts as the undergraduate voice on behalf of students majoring and minoring in Asian American Studies majors as well as those interested in taking courses. As a result of my involvement, I was fortunate to have had opportunities to program events for Asian Pacific American students on campus and to be one of a small handful of student leaders within APC and the Vietnamese Student Union (VSU) to respond to a racist and misogynistic document mailed to the AASC that year. Our month-long efforts in response to the document prompted UCLA Chancellor Gene D. Block to issue a statement regarding the prevalence of racism and discriminatory behavior against students of color on campus. Propelled by national media coverage, Chancellor Block's statement charged university stakeholders to create a proposal for the Diversity Requirement to be passed by the Academic Senate in the following year.

Methodology

Guided by my own history as a student organizer at UCLA during 2012-2014, I was fortunate to be in possession of a large, red binder² that was overflowing with more than 10 years of student organizing primary documents. Although this binder was passed down from previous student leaders over time, I sought other stories about the Diversity Requirement by reviewing articles from the *Daily Bruin* campus newspaper and by reading relevant literature that may expand on the history of an ethnic and gender studies requirement at UCLA. I combed through library archives within the Charles E. Young Research Library and spent hours in the UCLA Asian American Studies Center's Library and Reading Room to review former students' theses, artifacts, *CrossCurrents* newsletters, and other supplemental resources. I drew upon readings that focused on the Ethnic Studies Movement by Laura Pulido, Glenn Omatsu, Karen Umemoto,

² A collection of literature, advocacy documents, proposals, and correspondence, between 1987 and the mid-2000s, during the advocacy for the College of Letters & Science Diversity Requirement are compiled in this binder. Materials have been passed down and included across student generations.

Michael Liu, Kim Geron, and Tracy Lai to ground my research in social movement theory. Additionally, I referred to texts by Mitchell Chang, Howard Bowen, David Yamane, and Amy Gutmann to understand the transformation of higher education and the role of multiculturalism and later, diversity on college campuses. To my knowledge, there is no existing project that seeks to uncover the three-decade advocacy for the UCLA College of Letters & Science Diversity Requirement, nor one that places the voices of student leaders at the center of its analysis.

No amount of literature, however, can replace the insights of students who have advocated for this effort themselves. Reflecting upon my own experiences and relationships with student organizers, I reached out to alumni who served as key players during the campaign for the Diversity Requirement. With the support of Meg Thornton, the AASC's Students & Community Partnerships Coordinator (S/CP), I was able to identify key student leaders who preceded my time as possible resources. I conducted primary interviews between December 2015 and January 2018 with six student leaders who were directly involved in the advocacy for an undergraduate diversity course requirement at UCLA between 1993 and 2015 (e.g., Max Espinoza 1993-1999; Vy Nguyen 1995-1999; Bryant Tan 1999-2003; Layhannara Tep 2006-2011; Suza Khy 2006-2011; Jazz Kiang 2012-2016). I scheduled follow-up interviews to clarify or complete discussions between February and March 2018 as needed. Each respective interview lasted between two to eight hours each. The participants' age ranged from 19 to 24 during their time advocating for the undergraduate diversity requirement.

These participants come from multiple backgrounds that contributed to their politicization and involvement at UCLA. They respectively identify as Chicano, Vietnamese American, Burmese Chinese, Cambodian American, Cambodian American, and Chinese

American. An overwhelming majority of the participants shared an affinity to an immigrant experience; one was formerly undocumented, and three explicitly stated strong connections to their families' immigrant or refugee backgrounds. In addition, the participants expressed feelings of home and belonging to Mexico and San Diego; Vietnam and San Diego; Tenderloin, San Francisco; Long Beach; Long Beach; and Boston, Massachusetts. Many of the participants also cited coming from low-income backgrounds, with the exception of one participant who came from a professional background.

Comparable to the first, second, third, fourth, and so on generation student activists of the TWLF and Ethnic Studies strikes, the students leading the charge for the Ethnic Studies and gender requirement are children of a younger generation of immigrants and refugees of the Vietnam War, Khmer Rouge, Anti-Marcos regime in the Philippines, and post-colonial Hong Kong. It is significant to understand the social, economic and political location of the student, as well as their location in relation to whiteness. Where students of the 1960s and 70s might identify as first- or second-generation Asian Americans, similarly for students of the 1990s and early 2000s; students of the mid 2000s and 2010s may be positioned closer to a U.S. national identity rather than a racial or ethnic one.

While there may be large gaps between our organizing periods, our contributions suggest profound connections which may transcend time and space. My participants' stories reaffirm the significance of Ethnic Studies and organizing spaces as nexuses for social change. All six participants were involved in student organizations and served in a leadership capacity: one joined the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA), three were involved with the Concerned/Critical Asian Pacific Islander Students for Action (CAPSA), four joined APC, and one wrote for the *Daily Bruin* and *Pacific Ties* newsmagazine. Many of them were also involved

in the Undergraduate Students Association Council (USAC): four served as the Academic Affairs Commissioner (AAC) and three served as the Chief of Staff for the Office of the AAC. One student went on to become the University of California (UC) Student Regent. As a result, their legacies have left a deep impact on the organizational structures of the university.

While I have been fortunate to develop relationships with many of the alumni I interviewed for this project, I acknowledge this may present forms of unconscious bias within this analysis. I consider all of the featured alumni as organizing predecessors who sustained the movement for an undergraduate diversity course requirement. Nevertheless, the unique access I have to my alumni and peers is a strength that other researchers most likely do not have. Additionally, I would like to raise concerns about clarity. Some of the discussions I had with the alumni—depending on how recent their graduation was—were shaped by their ability to recall experiences. A few struggled with their memories and cited different years of their involvement, which may present issues concerning validity. To address the fluidity of memory, I revisited primary documents produced during the time of attendance to corroborate claims. Therefore, as I tell these stories knowing the point of view of the alumni, I attempt to remain faithful to the events that unfolded based on other primary and secondary documents.

Our stories may diverge like rivers, but come together as one. Nonetheless, this piece possesses significant limitations due to an expected thesis length and time constraints. Therefore, some stories of those who contributed to the longevity of this effort may not be included; those featured represent patterns of the gravitational pull of the social movement tides. My participants and their shared knowledge push back and resist the movement's ebb, allowing the continuous flow of student advocacy to bring about increments of change.

Theory

Social Movement Theory

With locked arms or fists up, songs rose out of Yellow Pearls singing songs for ourselves, while fierce Sansei women moved in multiple directions to the sounds of their three-step boogie.³ The Asian American Movement (AAM) was an organized, social movement for racial justice that grew from the Black Power Movement and Anti-War protests during the 1960s (Maeda, 2016). As Chris Iijima, Nobuko Miyamoto, and Charlie Chin crooned in their 1973 song, “We Are the Children,” the AAM emerged as a collective voice that highlighted the overshadowed, diverse experiences of Asian Americans—children of migrant laborers, children of internment survivors, children of war, and children of the Third World. As a case study for social movement theory,⁴ students articulated personal grievances into social issues, developed coalitional bonds across communities of color, and demanded institutional transformation.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was viewed as the needle that tipped towards a paradigm shift of political consciousness. Following the impact of de-segregation, the Vietnam War, and California Master Plan for Higher Education, campus climate at college universities appeared to revive unresolved tensions masked by a segregated society. Similar to other identity-based movements, the endurance of the AAM lay within the intersections of community-based advocacy and student empowerment through campus-based organizations in college campuses. As former students stated, “Like a river, the Asian student movement derives its source from a variety of streams as reflected by the organizations that participated... united streams mobilizing

³ For further reading on Sansei women and the Asian American Movement, see Kao, M. (2009). Three-Step Boogie in 1970s Los Angeles: Sansei Women in the Asian American Movement. *Amerasia Journal* 35(1), 112-138.

⁴ Social Movement theory: political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes dependent upon the presence of group grievances, collective identity and group identification, framing of issues, microstructural network and recruitment, and indigenous resource mobilization (Liu, Geron & Lai, 2008).

and generating power capable of changing the environment on campus and in our communities.”⁵

The TWLF Ethnic Studies strikes at San Francisco State College Strike 1968-1969 and UC Berkeley 1969 were shaped by a political consciousness demanding self-determination and a commitment to serve the people. Students from underrepresented student organizations borrowed from the persistence of the Civil Rights era, militancy of the Black Panther Party, and based their philosophical foundations on Karl Marx and Mao Zedong. As students of the Radical Left, the TWLF understood their advocacy as a disruption of hegemonic ideals. Through the creation of student organizations and student initiated programs, students were able to harness resources from their respective college campuses and engage in community-based organizing. Whether it be advocating for improved social services or creating college pipelines for low-income, historically underserved communities of color, students sought to reimagine a world where justice could be achieved “by any means necessary.” And most importantly, understanding “self-determination” meant redefining or determining one’s own destiny through intentional measures. For “without the presence of political organizations, counterhegemonic activity would be limited to rebellion and random acts of protest” (Pulido, 2006, p. 89).

The five-month campus unrest at San Francisco State College was a direct response to the California Master Plan for Higher Education and enrollment impact of minority students. The strike gave birth to the country’s first School of Ethnic Studies. Outcomes of the strike allowed for the creation of Ethnic Studies programs, initiatives directed towards minority students, hiring of minority faculty, and development of campus cultural centers across the three tiers of postsecondary education. For the students:

⁵ An excerpt from Enriquez, B. (1989). Building Common Ground. *CrossCurrents*, 13(1), 6.

self-determination includes meeting our own needs in education. Under the traditional mechanisms of the University, the Regents and the Administration decide what the students' educational needs are and direct those decisions downward, through the bureaucracy, for the students to respond to. The Regents and the Administration are clearly neither Third World nor students. They do not know what our needs are. They know their own needs—what is best for big business, and what is best for remaining secure in an administrative position.⁶

Empowered by self-determination, the students demanded the creation of Ethnic Studies programs, multicultural centers, and the increase of faculty hiring across the institution:

Where Asian American Studies programs were created, they became 'counter-hegemonic' centers. They operated as democratic, anti-hierarchical entities where service to the community was a fundamental value. The expanding Asian American population at colleges and universities allowed the AAM to continue to utilize the resource base of the educational system. Students accessed campus resources and organized fundraisers to help start community organizations and support campus and community causes in the fledgling Movement (Liu, Geron & Lai, 2008).

Although the advocacy efforts of the TWLF and Ethnic Studies strikes resulted in the victories and concessions towards the creation of curricular and programmatic efforts, many remain vulnerable to institutional pressure:

Administration hostility constantly threatened the stability of these programs and blunted their capacities. Tenure-track positions were grudgingly and incrementally yielded.

⁶ For further reading, see Asian American Pacific Alliance (1971). "Asian Studies: The Concept of Asian Studies" in Tachiki, A., Wong, E., Odo, F., and Wong, B. (eds). *Roots: An Asian American Reader* (Regents of the University of California), pp. 264.

Because of the transitory nature of the student activism, which destabilized campus organizations' effectiveness, campus groups were soon overshadowed by the growth of community-based political formations (Liu, Geron & Lai, 2008).

Some of the programs have subsequently been eliminated. Further efforts to achieve justice and equity was overshadowed by the optics of the Ronald Reagan Administration 1981-1989.

The years that followed, prior to the California Assembly Bill 383 and California State Assembly Concurrent Resolution 71, appeared to observe a calm across college campuses. Although campus tensions remained dormant, the legacy of the TWLF Ethnic Studies strike at San Francisco State College (1968-1969) and UC Berkeley (1969) catalyzed campus movements towards educational reform. Such commitments to achieve self-determination, by any means necessary, and to serve the people were conceptualized with the creation of the Ethnic Studies research centers and their sustained contributions to the UCLA campus community. As the Third World Liberation Front San Francisco State College Strike was a "redefinition of education, which in turn was linked to a larger redefinition of American society" (Umemoto, 1989, p. 4), the three-decade long student advocacy for the Diversity Requirement was a recommitment to a transformative education, which in turn was linked to the desire for a more global, transformative society.

Therefore, the social movement theory can be understood not only as an organizing framework for the San Francisco State College and UC Berkeley strikes for Ethnic Studies, but the later student movements for multicultural education. Particularly in regard to the incorporation of an ethnic and gender studies requirement, social movement theory allows further analysis of how students turned isolated incidents into longer narratives of struggle, garnering the political capital and resources to pursue their goals, and push for change on an

institutional level. While the movement for an ethnic and gender studies requirement is linked to the struggle for Ethnic Studies, its sporadic periods of momentum and stagnation across multiple generations of students indicate challenges in sustaining a cohesive movement. Perhaps, the fight for an ethnic and gender studies requirement is made even more unique because of institutional disruptions or student turnover. Therefore, the three-decades of student advocacy for an ethnic and gender studies requirement required necessary reinvention according to the changing environmental landscape of UCLA including campus climate, student enrollment, and the role of external political forces.

The Role of the Organizational Saga

Often, institutional transformation has been memorialized through the organizational saga. Burton Clark (1972) defines the organizational saga “as the collective understanding of a unique accomplishment in a formally established group” (p. 178). It may be influenced by embellishments through retelling and rewriting, but serves as a bridge that documents organizational development. Many researchers interested in the study of higher education and organizational change have understood organizational saga in reference to the university at large. Gradual transformations which may signal a paradigm shift have emerged as responses to the external conditions of the state and been ushered in by leaders within the university setting. Therefore, changes within the institution of higher education are more likely accepted and maintained by the following players: administrators, staff, and faculty, many of whom hold a degree of power or influence on the inner machinations of the institution’s operations and thus, control the narrative that would come to follow. For the purposes of this thesis, “organizational saga refers to a set of public expressed beliefs about the formal group that is rooted in history, claims unique accomplishment and is held with sentiment by the group” (Clark, 1972, p. 179).

The three-decade effort to pass the Diversity Requirement symbolizes the incredible longevity of student advocacy and students' commitment to sustaining a movement. Drawing upon social movement theory as a frame to understand how students developed the movement, the passage of institutional knowledge operates as an organizational saga which helped continue their efforts across multiple generations. For some, the organizations may become the only reality and the outside world is the delusion. For students involved in these student organizations, there was a deep sense of commitment to the group and its history. To assert its power and its contributions to the campus, students maintained the story as it was passed on to them. Much of this is credited to an inherent belief in the organization's mission and historical contributions to pushing the university forward. Therefore, "the element of belief is crucial, for without the credible story, the events and persons become history; with the development of belief, a particular bit of history becomes a definition full of pride and identity for the group" (Clark, 1972, p. 178).

Considering the multiple generations of student leaders who have gone through the university, before the passage of the Diversity Requirement, it is evident that "a single leader can initiate the change, but the organizational idea will not be expanded over the years and expressed in performance unless ranking powerful members become committed to it and remain committed even after the initiator is gone" (Clark, 1972, p. 181). Thus, younger generations of students feel compelled to continue their predecessors' efforts in order to preserve their organization's legacy of advocating for curricular change.

Therefore, while social movement theory may describe the creation of a movement, the organizational saga offers possibilities for sustaining a movement. Organizational saga theory can provide perspectives on how student history is passed down across multiple generations of

student leaders and how students' goal to pass a Diversity Requirement remained a consistent priority across three decades.

Situating Asian American Studies and Students at UCLA

UCLA Asian American Studies Center (UCLA AASC)

The UCLA Asian American Studies Center (AASC) was created as an Organized Research Unit (ORU) in 1969. Housed in Campbell Hall, it established an Interdepartmental Degree Program (IDP), including a Master of Arts (MA) Program in Asian American Studies in 1976. Since its inception, the IDP in Asian American Studies has existed as a nexus of political advocacy and community involvement. Serving as the bridge between theory and practice, the AASC created Ethnic Studies curricula and published national publications like *GIDRA*, *CrossCurrents*, *Amerasia Journal* and *AAPI Nexus Journal*—whose literary and scholarly contributions reshaped access across research and community-building. The Center has fostered relationships across generations of alumni, community-based organizations, and other pioneers within the evolving field of Ethnic Studies. Informally, Campbell Hall rooms 3221 and 3232 housed the political operations of student organizations such as Asian Pacific Coalition (APC), Concerned/Critical Asian Pacific Student Alliance (CAPSA), American Indian Student Association (AISA), Nikkei Student Union (NSU), and others. While the IDP in Asian American Studies evolved into the Department of Asian American Studies (AASD) in 2004 and is based in Rolfe Hall, its legacy of student activism has persisted. Student organizations continue to meet in Campbell Hall 3221 and 3232.

The three-decades of student-initiated advocacy for an ethnic and gender studies requirement at the University of California, Los Angeles 1985-2015 are an extension of the TWLF and Ethnic Studies strike held on the campuses University of California, Berkeley in

1969 and San Francisco State College from 1968-1969. For many, “the campaign to get a campus-wide ethnic studies requirement passed at various colleges across the nation marks a new stage in the growth of ethnic studies” (Chan, 1989, p. 268).

Concerned Asian Pacific Students for Action (CAPSA)

“From CAPSA’s perspective, we really, at the time, ...were a core group of 20 students who were hard core activists who wanted to change the world and wanted to change the school... [At the time, we were thinking about] what was an effective way to have impact beyond us just being this left, Asian group on campus that people might think is marginal or is the crazy activist hippies?”

- Bryant Tan, on the organizational leadership of CAPSA⁸

Concerned Asian Pacific Students for Action (CAPSA) is an organization that formed in the 1970s as a space to raise awareness about critical issues impacting the Asian Pacific Islander community. In comparison to other student organizations on UCLA’s campus, CAPSA is dedicated to the empowerment of Asian Pacific Americans by promoting political action for the betterment of Asian Pacific Islanders and other communities of color. CAPSA is a “progressive, action-oriented, pro-student and pro-people organization” (CAPSA Facebook, 2010). CAPSA was one of a few student organizations sponsored by Student & Community Partnerships (S/CP) under the UCLA AASC. During 2010-2011, CAPSA changed their name to Critical Asian Pacific Islander Students for Action.

Asian Pacific Coalition (APC)

In the 1970s—Asian Americans represented nearly 20% of the undergraduate population. Although there were a handful of student organizations dedicated to the advancement of specific

⁸ B. Tan, Interview, December 22, 2017.

ethnic populations, many struggled to develop programming due to lack of resources.

As a response, students created Asian Coalition in 1975 to collectively advocate for financial support under the pan-ethnic, political identity of Asian American. Advocacy for resources led to an interest in having student government representatives who could be supportive of the students' initiatives. Under the Third World Coalition, a collective of organizations representing students of color, the Director of Asian Coalition Samuel Law was elected as the first Asian American student body president in 1981. The growing attention to Asian American issues sparked larger conversations concerning inclusivity for student populations belonging to other ethnic groups within the umbrella identity. Considering the experiences of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders, the Asian Coalition officially changed its name to Asian Pacific Coalition (APC) in 1987. Today, the umbrella coalition is composed of more than 20 Asian Pacific Islander student organizations. APC is the official voice of Asian Pacific Americans on campus.

Chapter One: The Problem with Diversity

Student Movements for Multiculturalism and towards Diversity

In the 1980s, the UC was confronted by a resurgence of student activism to advance the interests of students of color and demand the addition of an ethnic and gender studies requirement. Initially adopting multiculturalism as the organizing framework for transforming higher education, students, faculty, and staff began shifting towards the concept of diversity—an expansion of a multiculturalist agenda. Protests erupted across college campuses, threatening the optics of the university and shaking the public’s confidence in higher education. As a response, several campuses across the UC-system adopted an ethnic and gender studies requirement into their undergraduate curriculum. In comparison, UCLA was one of the few remaining campuses not to incorporate its own undergraduate diversity requirement. Nevertheless, it appeared UCLA had begun engaging in discussions on the topic of diversity and curriculum reform.

1984-1987: Assembly Concurrent Resolution 71

Following the 1965 Higher Education Act, and its 1972 amendments, the door was open for need-based federal student aid that students could utilize at their institution of choice. This legislation partially supported the growing interest of low-income students of color to pursue college. Student aid, among other factors, facilitated the enrollment of students of color, which may have prompted the state mandate to review higher education curriculum.

The foundation for re-opening discussions on relevant education and student unrest was the 1983 Assembly Bill 383. Co-sponsored by Representative Theresa Hughes (D-Los Angeles), the 1983 Assembly Bill (AB) 383 would have “mandated the addition of ethnic studies to the Associate or Baccalaureate degrees” (Petersen & Cepeda, 1985, p. 1) at the Cal State College and California Community College levels. Confronted by opposition from the three tiers of post-

secondary education—University of California (UC), California State College, and junior college systems, as established by the California Master Plan of Higher Education—faculty understood this “as an infringement on their academic and professional responsibility for determining its programs” (Petersen & Cepeda, 1985, p. 3). Thus, it infringed upon Gutmann’s (1999) definition of academic freedom: “freedom of scholars to assess existing theories, established institution, and widely held canons of truth” (p. 175), whereby education is free from interference by the state. Although the bill died on the floor, its defeat in the legislature allowed for the subsequent adoption of Assembly Concurrent Resolution 71 in 1984.

The 1984 ACR 71 requested all public institutions of higher education to “review their policies and programs concerning the nature and extent of courses examining the cultural and historical experiences of those nonwhite ethnic groups which have been excluded from the curriculum and report to the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) on January 1, 1985” (Petersen & Cepeda, 1985, p. 3). ACR 71 appeared to be a tempered version of AB, prompting the University of California to consider adopting an Ethnic Studies requirement. Thus, the UC’s compliance must reaffirm the value of nonwhite ethnic student experiences in the course curriculum.

After reviewing the curriculum and enrollment in Ethnic Studies at each UC campus, the UC administration did not deem the inclusion of an additional requirement to be necessary for exposing students to the value of nonwhite experiences. A report from the Office of the President titled, “*Report on Programs and Courses within the University of California Related to Ethnic Groups in Response to ACR 71*” (italics added for emphasis) stated:

UC administration argued that ‘on all campuses breadth requirements make it unlikely that a student will graduate without coming to grips with racial/ethnic issues in some

serious fashion. Would it therefore be a good idea to impose this on all the campuses as a centralized requirement? Although within the University system, the various courses and subject areas differ from campus to campus, the Academic Senate *does not see a need for specific new policies on ethnic studies or University-wide course or program requirements in this area* (Yamane, 2001, p. 15).

However, the UC system wide Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP), under the UC Academic Senate, reported a resolution to the CPEC (1985) stating (italics added for emphasis):

Now therefore be it resolved that the University Committee on Educational Policy will ensure regular review of courses meeting both the American History and Institutions requirement and general breadth requirements and that the University Committee on Educational Policy will continue, as always, to focus on maintaining the excellence and the variety of subject areas accessible to the student as breadth and elective courses, to serve as the foundation for lifelong learning, *including courses representing the cultural and historical experiences of ethnic minorities* (Yamane, 2001, p. 52).

There seemed to be a difference in opinion concerning the role of curriculum in higher education across faculty, staff, students, and the legislature. At the UC administrative level, members of the Academic Senate did not find a necessity to change undergraduate course requirements without proof of definite impact. However, the release of the report on the UC response to ACR 71 addressed to the Associated Students of the University of California's State Student Lobby prompted student engagement in the resolution. Students from UC Berkeley, UC Santa Cruz, UCLA, and other college campuses began the "long march" (Yamane, 2001) to an Ethnic Studies requirement, strategizing and organizing amongst faculty, and coordinating a system wide protest to divest from South Africa during the apartheid. Similar to the fight for

ethnic studies' call to move "away from assimilation and towards cultural pluralism" (Umemoto, 1989), ACR 71 and the struggle to implement an ethnic and gender studies requirement is a reaffirmation of recognizing the distinct values of nonwhite ethnic experience can yield positive results. Thus, perhaps the goal that an ethnic and gender studies requirement was a step towards a multicultural education, now more widely known as a more diverse education.

Although the early years following the passage of ACR 71 unveiled the UC's resistance to curricular change, the renewal of student activism reminiscent of the TWLF at San Francisco State College and UC Berkeley prompted various campus institutions to consider revisions of their attitude. By 1987, the Policy UCEP Resolution on Ethnicity, Appendix E included language:

That the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) of each of the campuses will make a concerted effort to maintain and enhance the variety and accessibility of courses and programs representing the cultural and historical experiences of ethnic groups; and that the CEP on each of the campuses develop a written policy which will enable and encourage all undergraduates to acquire awareness, knowledge, and understanding of ethnicity (Ramos, 1989, p. 5).

Yet, many UC campuses demonstrated resistance to the policy change and the expansion of the undergraduate curriculum. While there may have been a shift across the enrollment demographics of the undergraduate population, members of the campus community refused to acknowledge the onset of multiculturalism as an emerging framework during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Institutions within higher education erupted in campus wars with students, faculty, and staff.

1987: A Proposal for an Ethnic and Gender Studies Requirement

On November 1987, UCLA Chancellor Charles E. Young endorsed a proposal to include an ethnic and gender studies General Education Requirement at the “Discussion Group on Diversity and the Undergraduate Curriculum” during the Affirmative Action and Ethnic Diversity conference hosted at Lake Arrowhead. By Spring, the Executive Committee of the UCLA College of Letters & Science appointed Professor Guillermo Hernandez of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese and Professor Katherine King of the Department of Comparative Literature as Co-chairs of the Task Force on the Ethnic and Gender Studies Requirement. The Task Force, composed of student representatives of underrepresented organizations, faculty and staff of all Ethnic and Women’s Studies programs and centers, convened over twelve months to discuss options to fulfill the requirement. In Hernandez and King’s 1990 report, “A Proposal for an Ethnic and Gender Studies Requirement in the College of Letters & Science,” members of the Task Force discussed priority areas recommended by the Executive Committee:

1. The need for immediate action
2. The need for the College to integrate any such requirement within the scope of the present requirements so that students will not be burdened with any additional requirements
3. Whether the requirement will be a GE or graduation requirement
4. The domestic and international dimensions of a requirement
5. How different “minorities” relate to the majority culture both nationally and in California
6. Resource options

After discussing these considerations, the committee reviewed other UC campus

requirements, implemented or proposed, as models for comparison and reviewed the course offerings in undergraduate education. The Task Force put together a preliminary draft of the proposed Ethnic and Gender Studies Requirement and presented it to the ethnic and women's studies programs and centers on campus. The feedback from the respective programs and centers, General Education committee, and Executive committee informed the Task Force's final recommendations for the first version of the proposed Ethnic and Gender Studies Requirement. The draft titled, "A Proposal for an Ethnic and Gender Studies Requirement," recommended a two-course ethnic and gender studies general education requirement including: one "lower division course, 'Critical Studies of Race, Gender and Ethnicity'" and a second, 2-4 unit lower or upper division course involving composition and/or fieldwork complementary to the "Critical Studies" course.

It was submitted for review on May 28, 1990 and subsequently rejected. Although there was a shift in attitude from UC administration, the ethnic and gender studies requirement forcefully imploded on itself. Disagreement over whether the ethnic and gender studies requirement would be an additional requirement or additional course to the already existing breadth courses stalled discussions among faculty. This also caused other faculty to question whether courses that include discussion on race, ethnicity and gender could be consider eligible to satisfy this requirement. Along with this, conversations about committing additional resources to the requirement seemed unfavorable. Many faculty were concerned about the disproportionate responsibility to meet the demands of the requirement citing certain faculty would be forced to teach more courses with larger class enrollments. It would be unfair to place this burden on a select portion of faculty, especially those serving smaller, under resourced programs.

From a certain perspective, there appeared to be certain expectations of fulfillment made

more complicated by the varying levels of respectability across faculty at UCLA. Disagreements were rooted in acknowledgement of academic rigor and achievements across disciplines, as well as the perceived prestige situated in faculty status. Higher education continues to be engaged in a “perennial battle between educational excellence and access” (Chang, 2017, p. 43), association versus academic freedom (Gutmann, 1999). UCLA was not ready or willing to incorporate a counterhegemonic ideology into the undergraduate general education curriculum. Nor was the campus prepared to adopt frameworks that placed an emphasis on diversity without having a clear definition, regardless of existing research on the impact of diversity in representation and the landmark decision of *University of California v. Bakke* (1978).

1990-1993: Students for an Ethnic and Gender Studies Requirement

Shortly after the rejection of the Task Force on the Ethnic and Gender Studies Requirement, during fall 1990, the Academic Senate Chair Professor David Kaplan appointed a new task force. The new task force for the American Cultures and Diversity Requirement was chaired by Seymour Feshbach with minimal student input. Unlike other college campuses, UCLA’s faculty and administration did not relent to the students’ investment in the formation of the requirement. Therefore, students developed a 199-independent study course to develop strategies on the student movement for an ethnic and gender studies requirement during spring. By late summer, the task force submitted a proposal for an American Cultures General Education Requirement—which could be satisfied over the course of one-quarter.

Dissatisfied with the institution’s exclusion, students formed an advocacy group called Students for an Ethnic and Gender Studies Requirement. To reclaim the issue and galvanize student support the group facilitated an independent study class titled, “Student Power: Towards an Ethnic and Gender Studies Requirement,” sponsored by Glenn Omatsu of the UCLA AASC

and Professor Raymond Rocco. The course was meant to serve as an organizing base where students were given academic credit to work for social change, allowed students to remain involved in a campaign, and re-instilled the importance of having student input throughout curriculum reform. Students in the class were asked to develop a proposal for the requirement, which would be submitted to the task force for consideration.

Chapter Two: External Conditions Transforming the University Landscape

We Are Not Going Away, Not Now, Not Ever

Hundreds of voices bellowed across Dickson Plaza to Royce Quad. The red bricks were stained both by sweat and by chalked protestations of decades of struggle. UCLA's North Campus has been the staging grounds for countless demonstrations. Between 1989-1992, students involved in the Asian Pacific Languages and Cultures Committee (APLCC) fought to create South and Southeast Asian language courses in the General Course catalog and UCLA Extension. News clippings of the APLCC protests in Meyerhoff Park lay juxtaposed with scathing editorials by student advocates and staff of the AASC's publication, *CrossCurrents*.

In October 1992, the discovery of a racist, sexist songbook belonging to fraternities at UCLA circulated amongst the campus community. Lyrics within the songbook promoted sexual violence against women of color and hateful speech against members of the Lesbian, Gay Bisexual and Transgender community.⁹ However, responses from the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Campus Life were lackluster and traversed between the delicate balance of free speech and political correctness. As a consequence, student unrest demanding commitment, definition, and representation of diversity occupied the enormous backdrop of UCLA during the late eighties and early nineties.

During this period, the university appeared to be erupting simultaneously as the static infused images of Rodney King's beating by the Los Angeles Police Department flooded the television screen. Footage of Korean shop owners armed with military grade guns, as well as black and brown people running with looted goods flashed during the replay of Los Angeles

⁹ For more information on the racist, sexist fraternity songbooks see Gordon, L. (1992). Fraternity Faces Sanctions for Offensive Songbook. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/1992-10-02/local/me-115_1_national-organization

burning during the 1992 Los Angeles Uprisings. In May 1993, 200 students marched towards the UCLA Faculty Center to protest campus budget cuts and the Chancellor Young's rejection of a proposal to create a Chicano/a Studies Department. 99 students were arrested for incurring \$50,000 damages to the campus. As a response, eight students and one faculty member orchestrated a 14-day hunger strike in the hallway of Murphy Hall. As a result, the administration negotiated to create the César E. Chávez Research Center, which would host an interdepartmental program in Chicano/a Studies.

While students made considerable gains challenging the undergraduate curriculum, weeks without food and years of coordinated organizing exhausted the students' organizational leadership. The Chicana/o Studies Hunger Strike left MEChA extinguished—many of the students either graduated or had depleted their energies, thus, leaving MEChA structurally weak with low membership. Whereas, other students from the APLCC had reverted to advocating for their individual community issues or shifted their focus towards participation in USAC. Seemingly, the sophistication of students yielding large scale, cross-organizational advocacy efforts appeared to be losing momentum. As the smoke began to clear over the L.A. horizon, however, new challenges ignited behind closed doors.

Student Movement for an Ethnic and Gender Studies Requirement

The legacy of the TWLF and the strikes for Ethnic Studies at both SFSC and UC Berkeley left an organizing imprint on student protests for curriculum reform. During the 1980s, UCLA experienced campus unrest. Students wrote, “the student curriculum reform movements have two things in common. First, we are all fighting against Eurocentrism in the curriculum. Second, the primary movers and shakers behind these curriculum reform movements are students” (Gusukama, 1993, p. 2). Seemingly in a coordinated effort, staff members of the

UCLA AASC and students involved in organizations submitted opinion editorials to *CrossCurrents* challenging UCLA's commitment to diversity.

They were able to connect seemingly disjointed efforts, stemming from multiple student organizations, as a larger call for curriculum reform. Therefore, it would not only be clear to the students, but to the entire campus community, that Don Nakanishi's battle for tenure, the APLCC, Chicano/a Studies Hunger Strike, and protests against the racist and sexist fraternity song books were coordinated efforts to bring about institutional change. Student demand for inclusion in the development and incorporation of an ethnic and gender studies requirement, later a diversity requirement, symbolized an institutional recognition of students of color wanting a relevant education not only for themselves, but also for the entire campus community. One student wrote:

the demand for an ethnic and gender studies requirement here at UCLA is yet another example of student power. Though the issues have been around the late 1980s, this year we have regrouped and are now stronger than ever. The students feel that the campus climate mandates such a requirement. We have seen the reappearance of misogynist, racist, homophobic fraternity songbooks, and student ignorance about the causes of the L.A. rebellion (Gusukama, 1993, p. 2).

Regardless of the ongoing efforts, without student input, the proposal for an undergraduate course requirement would fall short of its mission. Therefore, in an attempt to reach faculty members, students submitted petitions to the Academic Senate in favor of incorporating the American Cultures requirement. Unfortunately, the proposal was rejected by the Academic Senate. Instead, members offered resolutions to include multiculturalism in course syllabi.

Fall 1993-Spring 1995: Acknowledging Past Grievances

There appeared to be a new generation of students interested in coming to UCLA, despite setbacks with the sustainability of student organizing and the ethnic and gender studies requirement. As Max said:

When I ended up applying for colleges—there was a lot going on in 1992 and 1993 and I was waiting for my admissions There was the Los Angeles Uprising, police brutality. I had just attended a leadership program in Sacramento during the summer between my junior and senior year. It helped raise my own social and political consciousness. UCLA became really attractive to me because of where it was, besides being a great institution. I remember watching on television...I had never actually envisioned myself being in Los Angeles. But because of what was going on at the time, I felt really drawn...called to UCLA to be in Los Angeles as a center of where things were happening. Social change was happening in real time. As I was having to make decisions about where to go to college, the Chicana/o Studies Hunger Strike was taking place as well...Just a lot of stuff going on. The song books—the racist song books the fraternities had, etc. There was a lot going on. So, I was just, you know, I wanted to contribute. I wanted to be somewhere I can actually make a difference and it felt like being at UCLA was where I needed to be.¹⁰

Following the rejection of the proposal for an American Cultures and Diversity Requirement, student advocacy for an ethnic and gender studies requirement seemed to slip into dormancy. Student power had significantly diminished in the face of years of coordinated efforts. Although student organizations remained afloat during what appeared to be a power vacuum within student organizing, a few student leaders had gained admission into the university looking to become a part of the movement—and one of them would become a pivotal leader in many

¹⁰ M. Espinoza, Interview, December 9, 2017.

institutional transformations. Max stated:

I knew I was Mexican—Mexican American...I was also an immigrant. Mexican culture was a part of who we were. I was growing up in San Diego so American culture was a part of that, too. But to make the decision to identify myself as Chicano was definitely a process that happened before I got to UCLA. And that sort of founding a MEChA at our high school was a part of it. We were sort of claiming it and therefore, going down that path. That is who we are. You know, I was very young and I was still figuring all of this out. I continued to identify as Chicano and continued to define what that meant as I came to UCLA and while I was at UCLA.¹¹

Although Max represented the next wave of student organizers ready and hungry to fight, like so many other students of color on campus, Max experienced difficulties acclimating to the university:

Like any first-generation student, it was a rough transition. But I got involved right away to the campus. I think that helped keep me here actually. I think the other thing was as a person of color and as a person with immigrant parents, [pause] it did feel like we were under attack. Not necessarily by UCLA the institution, but by the forces around us. The governor at the time, Pete Wilson, he was anti-immigrant as well as anti-affirmative action, he had a “lock them up mentality.” That was really present and clear. The other thing I would add is just really feeling connected to things happening locally with the workers’ rights movement across Los Angeles. It was important to us here, to my friends here at UCLA. We had heard a lot about it. Frankly we identified with that struggle because these folks were like our parents. Feelings of kinship with their struggle and

¹¹ Ibid.

wanting to support them with having livable wages and having the ability to have their voices heard.¹²

During this time, the new student leaders had already begun to articulate particular grievances with the campus, aligning such issues with their own personal struggles and the political landscape of California. As a result, Max and other students felt compelled to challenge the university in the face of adversity on the campus and state level.

Max said:

FSP...was one of the ways UCLA would help...these student populations transition into the university...provide academic support, tutoring, [and] study hall. Tutoring programming in particular, was of such value to so many students. I later became very involved in the student-initiated campus retention efforts¹³ and later led the Campus Retention Committee as the Chair. But that is also another space for students. Those became spaces for lots of students to get the support they needed, but also to find community. Find others like them. Not necessarily the same race per se, but similar circumstances. Like being low income or just being in the same class or struggling on the same issue in class. Whatever it might be. And then combine [that] with being involved in the student groups. In my case it was MEChA and eventually being involved in student government. But it does not mean just because you are in student government you leave those communities, you are still a part of it. All of those things, connecting [in] support of those things, ...were really important [in] keeping me here and keeping me engaged. As

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Frustrated with the university's failure to support students of color, student organizations ASU and MEChA created the Student Retention Center (SRC) in the 1980s to support historically marginalized students who may be vulnerable to dropping out of college.

well as the faculty, too.¹⁴

For Max, student organizations like MEChA, Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano/a de Aztlán, were critical to his success. However, the impact of the Chicano/a Studies Hunger Strike and the graduation of student leaders had decimated. As a general member Max developed a new programmatic initiative that would fall within MEChA that aimed to create a pipeline for Latino/a youth into higher education. Max said:

I would say that project had a lot to do with sort of bringing a fresh new wave of leaders into MEChA, building up MEChA, because at the time there was a lot of fatigue and burnout from the prior student struggles on campus and in the community.¹⁵

Following the success of the Raza Youth Empowerment Conference (RYEC) Max had begun to stand out amongst the leadership within MEChA and had prompted the organization to revise its organizational leadership model. He also had begun to form relationships with other student groups on campus whose values were embedded in advocating for marginalized peoples.

Together, students advocated against the California Proposition 187 (1994), the Save Our State Initiative, aimed to create state-run programs that would screen for citizenship status and bar non-citizens from accessing public services. Although they lost, Max had transformed into one of the key student leaders who many believed would serve as a good candidate in student government—UCLA's Undergraduate Student Association Council (USAC). As one of the candidates for a student of color majority slate, Students First! Max shared:

Maybe without them I may have ended up dropping out or being dismissed at some point by the university if I was not engaged on campus, community and what was happening. It

¹⁴ M. Espinoza, Interview, December 9, 2017.

¹⁵ Ibid.

was definitely a difficult balance to be as involved and to do well academically. I am not going to say that I figured it out at the time... Interestingly as we started mentoring student leaders, particularly in my later years at UCLA, we really emphasized the need to find the right balance. So that students could do well academically, but also be an activist—figuring out a way where [the] two could coexist. Some students were better at that than others.¹⁶

As one of his peers stated, “Activism consumes his life, often to his own personal detriment. Studying, sleeping, and eating are secondary to his primary concerns of representing students in the community he serves.”¹⁷ By this time, students had begun to rebuild their organizing leadership across student organizations and to redirect their efforts towards community-based advocacy and also student government. Both seemed to be priorities to ensure student organizations received access to resources, as Vy shared, “The sense was the students who were elected really needed to stay accountable to their communities and constituencies in those Mother Organizations.”¹⁸ After emerging victorious from spring quarter USAC elections, Max shifted his focus on his newfound role as the incoming Academic Affairs Commissioner. However, he attempted to remain accountable to his student organizing, including fellow organizers who had help place him in this role.

October 1995-November 1996: Mitigation and Resistance

In the past, institutions of higher education invoked affirmative action to recognize past grievances given past racial and discriminatory practices from oppressive institutions and create

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ See Marantal, P. (1996, February 29). Taking it to the Max. *Daily Bruin*. Retrieved from <http://dailybruin.com/1996/02/29/taking-it-to-the-max/>

¹⁸ V. Nguyen, Interview, February 23, 2018.

pathways to higher education. Universities could therefore affirmatively act by identifying and offering admission to students who come from historically marginalized communities. In the Supreme Court's landmark decision in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978) the court allowed for race-conscious admissions, but decided strict racial quotas were unconstitutional. The court considered the following areas: whether race-conscious admissions policy served as a remedy for race-based discrimination, does it contribute to training a diverse workforce to meet the diverse needs of a greater population, and whether there were educational benefits to having a diverse student body.

The civil rights era of the 1960s, the *University of California v. Bakke* (1978) decision, and the subsequent decades of campus unrest revealed fissures in the country. This included the variance of public opinion concerning affirmative action admissions and programs within the UC. In October 1995, the UC Board of Regents passed the proposal for Special Policy 1 (SP 1) to eliminate the consideration of race, ethnicity, and gender in admissions within the UC system. Emboldened by their victory, UC Board of Regent Ward Connerly enhanced the language of SP 1 and drafted a proposal for the ballot initiative Proposition 209 for the November elections in 1996. The California Civil Rights Initiative mandated a state ban on affirmative action. It passed with 5,268,462 (54.6%) votes in favor and 4,388,733 (45.4%)¹⁹ in opposition, thus, eliminating affirmative action admissions across universities. As a result, Max stated:

Retention was important [to] informing institutional policies on the campus and how they could be more sensitive to the realities of students. You go to elite, private institutions, [whereas] as a public institution, UCLA prides itself on being [able] to compete on an academic level. But those private institutions make sure their students graduate. It is not

¹⁹ See Ballotpedia. (n.d.). *California Affirmative Action, Proposition 209 (1996)*. Retrieved from [https://ballotpedia.org/California_Affirmative_Action,_Proposition_209_\(1996\)](https://ballotpedia.org/California_Affirmative_Action,_Proposition_209_(1996))

just because they pick the top students, however that certainly is a part of it, but they also go above and beyond to make sure those students graduate. [Therefore], ensuring UCLA did that for its students, specifically these populations that were particularly impacted, marginalized, and underrepresented historically, was important.²⁰

The onslaught of state regulations forced students to find commonalities across perceived differences. This facilitated levels of respectability and recognitions across student organizations and presented opportunities for organizing moving forward:

The API²¹ community and the Chicano/a Latino/a community really bonded...battling Prop 187. Particularly given that we all had immigrant roots, there was great unity among APC, the constituencies of Asian Pacific Coalition and the constituencies that MEChA had...Affirmative action—that was an attack on all of our communities...[where] organizations like Afrikan Student Union, MEChA, APC, Samahang [Pilipino], and others really came together to try to fight back on that. We lost that fight. Just like we lost Proposition 187 fight, Proposition 184 fight. There were a lot of defeats during this time! But those defeats did not stop us from continuing to fight and to pick ourselves back up and do what we could in defeat. For example, once affirmative action was eliminated we had to organize...due to the fact that we knew there was going to be a precipitous decline of students of color at UCLA. Specifically, the Chicano/a Latino/a and African American students, we already knew that was going to drop significantly because all of the data and predictions said it and that in fact—was what happened.²²

²⁰ M. Espinoza, Interview, December 9, 2017.

²¹ API: Asian Pacific Islander

²² M. Espinoza, Interview, December 9, 2017.

To galvanize support around the issue, Max said:

...the students had different tactics they wanted to use...to register voters [and] to try to get to voters out to stop it at the polls...UCLA students were mobilizing voters, community members to vote against it. There were these efforts. But you know we also had those who, historically opposed affirmative action, were emboldened by SP 1 and SP 2 and the passage of 209 across the University of California system. So, while we had some institutional support...voicing opposition to the elimination of affirmative action or to Proposition 209, there were elements within the University of California, not just within the Board of Regents, but amongst the faculty that used this as an opportunity to restrict admissions and to impose their views about certain narrow interpretations about meritocracy... Particularly at places like Berkeley where you saw for a short period at least, pieces of anti-affirmative action forces on campus take control of the Academic Senate...and other places like...University of California, San Diego. My point being that...the faculty are very important. They actually control, to a great degree, the admissions process as well as the curricular process. These are key constituencies within the university and they were not all united against Proposition 209 or the elimination of affirmative action. They had elements that were also anti-affirmative action and saw this as an opportunity to finally do what they wanted to do.²³

Despite their losses with Proposition 187 (1994), SP 1 (1995), and Proposition 209, students like Max continued to be emboldened by their sense of empowerment:

We did lose a lot of those fights, but we went down fighting and to the very end. And even after they were passed we did everything we could to mitigate and to find other

²³ Ibid.

ways to ensure we did not get shut out from UCLA and other institutions... You know, as a young person you do not know what you do not know. You are willing to jump off a cliff to do things that are extraordinary. And so, I think having that youth and privilege of being at an institution like UCLA provided an opportunity to take some risks, to challenge authority, to challenge what was being done and what was being said. To [put] alternatives on the table.²⁴

Already anticipating the impact of Proposition 209, student organizations developed a two-bucket approach. Max explained [*italics added for emphasis*]:

Some of us worked on mitigation—how do we mitigate impact? What can we do to mitigate impact? Some focused on resistance. Resisting whatever that meant and continuing that until the very end... Resistance... came in different forms. Resistance was like, “*let us focus on retention.*” It also meant, in some cases, “*let us demand non-compliance.*” Some... student groups’ members did with 209. Or— “*let us organize protests to raise awareness.*” The mitigation strategy was both: “*let us make sure the people who are here graduate and make sure we figure out ways to get students on the admissions process...*” Not just tangentially or superficially, but “*what is the admissions process? Why is it that way? What can be done to modify it? [Not only for it] to be more adaptable to the needs of the community, state, but also, what can we do to recruit and prepare, prepare and recruit students to get to UCLA?*”²⁵

Winter 1997-Spring 1999: There is a Hole in Your Education

Although mitigation and resistance had consumed students’ priorities after the passage of

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

Proposition 209, students had not forgotten earlier efforts to advocate for an ethnic and gender studies requirement. As students continued to get involved, many fledgling leaders underwent an organizational socialization process—learning about the org history and the efforts of predecessors, one of which included the fight for an ethnic and gender studies requirement. One student, Vy believed she may have heard about advocacy for an ethnic and gender studies requirement from various mentors still active on UCLA’s campus:

Tim Ngubeni²⁶...had such an influence and was such a mentor to a ton of student activists, especially for folks who were involved with [Community Programs Office] (CPO), I do not know if it came from him, but it was a little bit of a student lore in the sense that it was like this campaign we would always lose because students would turn over, the faculty and university leadership could always outlast us...It was just this sense it was something so long overdue, but we had never been able to win. We had never been able to get there.²⁷

Vy credited much of her leadership development to the accessibility of these past student leaders, some of whom were directly affiliated with the UCLA AASC. In many ways, the tales of their contributions in the context of their organizational history had created a sort of student lore. Vy said [*italics added for emphasis*]:

I had felt so supported and close and mentored by those folks and they were kind of my connection to the Asian American Movement in a lot of ways. When I was there I think Yuji Ichioka was still there. Of course, Glenn. There would always be these funny rumors about people. Like, “*Did you know Glenn transported guns for the Black Panthers back*

²⁶ Tim Ngubeni was the former Director of the CPO, 1982-2007.

²⁷ V. Nguyen, Interview, January 23, 2018.

in the day?” It was always these different things, these myths that would come about! You know they were really our heroes in terms of the Asian American Movement. Mary had tons of stories as well, of course. Russell and his involvement in the Kearny Street poets, I guess. There was just a little bit of myth and a little bit of an awe of these folks being so impactful during their Movement days.²⁸

Therefore, during Max’s campaign as the USAC Academic Affairs Commissioner, Max’s platforms included the passage of an ethnic and gender studies requirement. Due to their organizing relationship together, he and Vy had become a tight knit unit that resulted in larger advocacy efforts during the academic year 1996-1997. Vy said:

I kind of remember Max and I talking about it—a possibility laid within the Academic Affairs office itself. In looking at not [just] the curriculum per se, but looking at the education students were getting and trying to make it more relevant. That was something that was exciting that we felt we could work on.²⁹

Although the students lost considerable battles to the external policies impacting the world around them, the students began to reflect inwardly about the importance of mitigating and resisting within the curriculum, Max said:

When you think about UCLA as the place where leaders were made, which it is, we should want to equip our students with the knowledge and skills to be successful or help them be successful as leaders, as participants, contributors in a greater society... I think an ethnic and gender studies requirement, which later became a diversity requirement [and in] some places is an American Cultures Requirement, was really an effort to ensure

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

that students learned what they needed to learn and were well equipped to be participants, leaders, [and] contributors in a greater society.³⁰

To further their ambitions, students began to conduct research to understand why the past iterations of the ethnic and gender studies requirement failed. Many of the earlier proposals appeared to have some level of institutional commitment by the university, but had failed given the lack of communication and agreement amongst the faculty within the Academic Senate. Vy said:

We were aware of past campaigns and I think there was a sense that UCLA was overdue at the time. I could be wrong, but there was a sense that UCLA was the only one without an ethnic and gender studies requirement... Things could [be] pretty contentious racially and politically on campus and there was a sense [that] the demographics [were] changing.³¹

Although the students were aware of the campus climate, many agreed much of the student movements on the Diversity Requirement struggled with attaining resources to propel conversations forward. Although struggles like the Chicano/a Studies Hunger Strike, APLCC, and protests against the racist state policies were indicative of student power, curriculum change appeared to be an intangible force they could not reckon with. Max said:

I think we would have started the effort to get a diversity requirement probably even sooner than we did...[but] we were battling all of these other fronts. So, when we ran for student government, it actually gave us an opportunity. It became a part of our platform. Students First! was going to fight for a diversity requirement and curricular

³⁰ M. Espinoza, Interview, December 9, 2017.

³¹ V. Nguyen, Interview, January 23, 2018.

reform... Being [the] candidate for Academic Affairs Commissioner, that became a part of my platform... When I was elected, we would make the curriculum more responsive to the realities of various communities and to be more responsive to students and to society...³²

Through the Office of the Academic Affairs Commissioner, Max gained access to the multiple mechanisms within the Academic Senate—the Academic Senate Executive Board, and the College of Letters & Science Faculty Executive Committee. Max’s leadership in office provided the students additional opportunities to sit on the Undergraduate Council and General Education (G.E.) Work Group as appointed, undergraduate student representatives. This presented unique opportunities for students to get involved in curricular reform that reflected the students’ priorities. Vy said:

I think issues of student retention, issues of a relevant education—these were all issues of all things that were a part of our analysis at the time. What made for a relevant education? ...It was seen—I think for me, especially for me—as kind of an extension of the Ethnic Studies fight in a way. Ethnic Studies is so wonderful and there are these centers where you can be supported and take classes, but it did not touch everyone in the school. There was a sense that this needed to be expanded, not just with the students who would actively seek it out, but a part of anybody’s well-rounded education.³³

Drawing from their research concerning past efforts, Max and Vy sought to bring together student leaders who served as key leaders during their advocacy efforts battling the various state ballot initiatives. During winter 1997, Max and Vy formed the Student Committee for Diversity

³² M. Espinoza, Interview, December 9, 2017.

³³ V. Nguyen, Interview, January 23, 2018.

Requirement, a committee of student leaders who historically supported the effort—many of whom were from the Mother Organization (MO) coalition. However, Max experienced many challenges and confessed:

It was not front and center. I think that was because all of the organizations were trying to deal with all of these other things that were urgent—like Proposition 209. Because the student government folks were supported by the student groups, it gave student groups the opportunity to allow leadership [to] come from student government, while they were continuing to work on these other fronts that students really cared about and needed attention. It was almost like a division of labor. Dividing who could do what? Who could lead on what? But nothing could be done—student government alone would not be able to move that issue. It would need to be with support and advocacy by the student groups.³⁴

However, during 1994, the Academic Senate had already formed a General Education (G.E.) Work Group to review the G.E. requirements. Unlike the past efforts, this work group was not tasked with revisiting the subject of an ethnic and gender studies requirement. Max said:

...Getting the groups to designate someone to work...with the Academic Affairs Commission...was really important...so they [could] commit some time and resources to it, some capacity...Working with the coalition to figure out what the right strategy was to put the issue back on the table. If you think about it, at the time, it was not on the table. There was this G.E. work group that was already working on recommendations on General Education curriculum, but that was divorced from the issue of whether or not to have an ethnic and gender studies requirement or diversity requirement. So, we had to

³⁴ M. Espinoza, Interview, December 9, 2017.

figure out a way to inject the diversity requirement into the conversation when it was not a part of the conversation.³⁵

Therefore, as a way to raise awareness, Max brought student groups together to develop a marketing campaign that would raise awareness on multiple fronts. Max said:

One of the things we did...was the petition drive to garner support for the effort... We took these ideas to the committee and the committee contributed ideas to the strategy and the tactics we used. The fortune cookies... [were] another tactic to get students' attention and raise awareness. The materials that we put together, the flyers and the collateral... There was the flyer that had the syllabus burning with the hole in it— “there is a hole in your education”—symbolizing there is something missing from what you are learning... We knew that this was going to be an uphill fight particularly because it was not on the agenda. It had... been sidelined as an issue or some people would say it had been resolved in 1993 with the resolution. But it was not resolved for us... We also knew that we might not win, but if we could lay the foundation for future efforts that that would be really important. Keep in mind at this point we had been defeated many times on a whole bunch of things! So, we had gotten used to...the idea that we might not win. But we had to look at things from a longer view, as a part of the continuous struggle, rather than as a one-time event. We saw ourselves collectively, within the legacy of student activism and efforts around... this [particular] issue [as a] continuation...we did not see this as one thing... So, what can we do for the long-term to ensure...this struggle to get the diversity requirement to continue?³⁶

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

Although there seemed to be an institutional commitment from the university, the previous effort lacked organization from faculty, staff, and students, thus, leading to its downfall.

Unlike the previous effort, students wanted to raise awareness on the issue. In many ways, they believed their focus was to organize proactively on placing the ethnic and gender studies requirement on the agenda rather than it being a directive coming from the Chancellor.

Max said:

It was not on the agenda..., finding the appropriate vehicle for that was difficult, especially because there was not a faculty-led effort on it, and...the student organizations and student government were working on multiple things... The organizations were very stretched. We... were working on retention, outreach, admission reform, and this was another major issue that was going to take effort. [The] organizations were willing to work with student government, but we could not do it alone.³⁷

The Academic Senate's General Education (G.E.) work group was tasked with making revisions and recommendations to the undergraduate general education curriculum. However, without any discussion concerning the inclusion of an ethnic and gender studies requirement. Max attempted to leverage his position as the student representative in the Academic Senate to advocate for an ethnic and gender studies requirement in the G.E. workgroup.

Max said:

When you think about it, if you do not have a movement to back up a request like that, that can be put aside really easily. That vehicle may not have been the right vehicle anyway because it was already in the making. It was not something we were able to influence significantly or influence from start to finish... There needed to be a larger

³⁷ Ibid.

effort, which is why we need to organize.³⁸

Ultimately, the G.E. work group advised the inclusion, where relevant and appropriate, issues concerning ethnic/gender issues into already-existing curriculum, similar to the earlier G.E. work group's recommendations when they convened in 1993 to incorporate themes of multiculturalism into the classroom. However, from the student groups' perspective, the work group's recommendation veiled structural shortcomings of the undergraduate curriculum.

Max confessed:

This is an example of a shortcoming using student government. We cannot just rely on representation through student government to ensure these issues are addressed, because without an organizing effort to go along with it is easily put aside or dismissed.

Especially if there is no leadership within the faculty or administration to back up the student request or effort.³⁹

Similar to earlier efforts, Max and Vy facilitated an independent study course "The Student Movement for Curriculum Reform." With the support and partnership from pivotal resources like the various Ethnic Studies centers on campus, Max was able to bridge a relationship between students and faculty:

The faculty reviewed the curriculum, gave input, and signed off on it. Every week we had various speakers [and] faculty come in [to] teach the course. It was rigorous. [T]his was not [a] hang out and talk kind of class. This was a rigorous, in-depth review of curricular reform efforts [at] UCLA [and] also looking at it in context [of] what happened at other college campuses, the Third World Strike at Berkeley, our own history here at UCLA,

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

how all of those things connected to what we were trying to do.⁴⁰

As a way to formalize efforts, Max recalled:

there was serious awareness building and infrastructure in terms of building the knowledge of past efforts and failures and successes—looking at such things as like how did American Indian Studies come to be? How did Asian American Studies come to be? What went in to that? How were they successful? What are the shortcomings of that?⁴¹

Therefore, from soliciting signatures to passing out fortune cookies with covert messages supporting of an ethnic and gender studies requirement along Bruin Walk, students like Max carried out outreach tactics to educate students about the importance of an ethnic and gender studies requirement. Vy said:

I remember the class was about building support in sort of the progressive activist community because people were working on so many different issues, this was the way to get focus on this way for a bit...The class was composed of the key activists of all those student groups and USAC...⁴²

Vy elaborated:

In addition to the organizing groups... we wanted to get general, campus wide support. We had the petition, we would do flyering on Bruin Walk. We were trying to definitely use ways that were different, creative, and [would] strike people. [To] have people react a little more openly to it. Something like the fortune cookie was a little more creative and it

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² V. Nguyen, Interview, January 23, 2018.

was a little different, you could eat it—it was funny, a little bit of a novelty.⁴³

This was due in part to past permutations of the ethnic and gender studies requirement, or diversity requirement, failing to provide a clear definition of diversity as well as the general expectation of what the curriculum could achieve. As Vy recalled:

In the past it was always called an ethnic & gender studies requirement, right? Partly [because] it was a continuation of picking up where things had left off. [However,] I do not remember having explicit conversations on the word “diversity” requirement. I know at the time...there was a general sense for myself [and] maybe from other students about the word “diversity” watering down of the concept in some way. I can see how it can be more appealing to folks at the same time, so it was an interesting question.⁴⁴

As a consequence, students used ethnic and gender studies requirement or diversity requirement interchangeably. Although the student leaders felt strongly about advocating for curricular reform, many felt the title of an ethnic and gender studies requirement or diversity requirement embodied different values that would impact the desired educational outcomes. As Vy said [italics added for emphasis]:

I think just the general sense of a lack of rigor to that. A lack of understanding. A lack of rigor to what that even means like, “*What is an ethnic and gender studies class? Is that a legitimate, academic class and need?*” That had content beyond just the sense of political correctness.⁴⁵

However, for students like Vy and Bryant, access to Asian American Studies had profound

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

impact on their identity expansion and leadership development. Vy stated:

...I would say the classes were super intentional about connecting the history and thinking about Asian American Studies as an actual action and applying it in our daily life and in our activism. I remember really well that Glenn [Omatsu] had us do that was a lifeline exercise where you kind of map out your own personal history, but then you put in world or political history in there, too. For me it was like this lightbulb that went off about how my life connected to these political events and historical events that people like me, normal people, could have agency...⁴⁶

These classes enabled students to place themselves within the context of history. Their educational experiences did not only value the memory and recitation of information, but also demonstrated opportunities for practical application. In many ways, Asian American Studies served as a pedagogical tool that enhanced students' thinking and assumptions concerning leadership and organizing. Exposure to Ethnic Studies at an earlier age provided Bryant an alternative approach to pursuing higher education at UCLA—namely with the intention of majoring in Asian American Studies.

There is perhaps no coincidence that this particular generation of student leaders was heavily connected to the Asian American Studies Center. Many student leaders participated in the Asian Pacific American Leadership Development Project (APALDP), a two-quarter course series offered in Asian American Studies, dedicated to developing leadership and activism.

Bryant recalls:

...People were intrigued and like I think people were like, kind of, again everyone comes from a different context and I came from a context that did have Asian American leaders

⁴⁶ Ibid.

and fierce ones. But maybe people and other folks of color are not used to seeing fierce Asian American leadership? I think they are like or some of the other student orgs were like, “Where are y’all coming from? What is happening?”⁴⁷

By Spring 1999, a few Asian American student organizations of the Mother Organization split off from the coalitions’ progressive slate Praxis to form M2K—Mobilize 2000. As a consequence, members of Praxis had discovered students leading M2K began to align themselves with the fraternities and sororities, thus, dredging up earlier grievances with Greek Life after the discovery of the racist and misogynistic songbooks. Fissures within the coalition exposed underlying feelings of distrust and disrespect amongst students of color, particularly concerning the saliency of racial identity, politics and student organizing within the cross-organizational coalition space. Such feelings were further exacerbated by the impact of Proposition 209 eliminating affirmative action-oriented admissions policies.

2000-2002: Rescind and Repair

Bryant, along with other student leaders, organized the campus community to demand the UC Board of Regents repeal SP 1. It would be a symbolic gesture that forced the UC-system to acknowledge “an acceptance of personal responsibility for the disastrous consequences the regents have brought on the University of California system and would be a public acknowledgment of their mistake” (Caldwell, 2000). Amongst the student leaders calling for the repeal of SP 1, Bryant had stood out as one of the key figures leading the charge. As a result, many of the students within the MO encouraged Bryant to run during the next USAC elections with the slate, Students First! as their candidate for Academic Affairs Commissioner. One of Bryant’s platforms included the passage of the diversity requirement:

⁴⁷ B. Tan, Interview, December 22, 2017.

I think having had APALDP in my background, having had Ethnic Studies as a high school student—to know how one course can change your whole perspective things and using education to do that—there were various things, reasons I was personally interested in it.⁴⁸

Fall 2001-Spring 2002: An Educational Opportunity

Students attempted to use racially charged or discriminatory incidents as learning opportunities for the campus community. For the students in favor of a diversity requirement, Bryant felt this provided opportunities:

Every time there was some racist, misogynistic or stupid thing [that] we would notice around student behavior that could be addressed with education we always would refer to that is why we need a diversity requirement. No matter what. I think when I was in APC I was curious, personally. Like, “Why do we not have it? Why do we keep saying it in these meetings, but no one is really doing anything about it?”⁴⁹

Similar to past efforts, Bryant sought to uncover the historical permutations of the requirement and reached out to past alumni about their advocacy efforts. Although he had discovered organizing documents to raise awareness about the issue, Bryant discovered additional challenges with his predecessors’ approach:

I do not know the specifics of what was said or what I learned, but I think it had various permutations and the challenge I noticed was no one could define what “diversity” means and what the diversity requirement would entail. Is it Ethnic Studies? Is it Gender Studies? Is it Ethnic and Gender Studies? Is it Ethnic, Gender & LGBT Studies?⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

While in the past there was university backing for the diversity requirement, students, faculty, and administrators had difficulty defining diversity, including expectations concerning the requirement. While past efforts sought to raise awareness on the issue, Bryant stated, “I saw a lot of flyers and materials and things like that in my research, but I did not see notes from meetings or minutes from Academic Senate meetings or a list of who were our allies there.”⁵¹

In comparison to previous efforts, Bryant’s approach sought to use the tools of the AAC and work within the Academic Senate. Bryant recalls:

I had a rough time, there were four or five Academic Senate committees I thought were going to allow for student reps to be on, these were going to be the pivotal ones if we could get students on. We can just march on the same beat and keep pounding on this topic of the diversity requirement and make some traction. But I even had some trouble filling those seats. I really tried to revamp it and produced a bunch of literature and materials on it.⁵²

However, there appeared to be a difference in fidelity to this particular issue. Although the students had successfully organized a system wide protest against SP 1, it appeared students had diverted their interests elsewhere. This included Bryant’s aspirations to gain traction on the diversity requirement. Bryant confessed:

What ended up happening is I appointed people and I would be like, “*hey how was that meeting*” and they would be like, “*Hey, I did not go. Or I forgot.*” I do not need to name names, but I think that was a common thing to happen. Where I appointed these

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

positions, but it was a confluence of maybe their own stressors or maybe they had a lot of things going on in their lives or there was no momentum for it. I was trying to create momentum and people were not taking what I was giving or taking the bait. Or joining in.⁵³

In some cases, their lack of response created an adverse effect on Bryant's credibility as the one leading the charge. Some individuals had assumed that the lack of representation signaled his own capabilities as an elected official on USAC, which later manifested during his campaign to become USAC President by the end of 2002. As Bryant put it [*italics added for emphasis*]:

And the larger national context like the Iraq War and the people, I think people pivoted from "*Let us focus on the diversity requirement to let us focus on anti-war protests.*"

Which is fine. Like, "*Let us try to make sure Bush is out of office. What is this weapons of mass destruction talk?*" I think the whole world got swept up in that so that took the steam out of whatever we were trying to do on campus.⁵⁴

The specter of 9/11 and the War on Terror had diverted students' attention away from the diversity requirement and towards anti-war protests. However, unlike the Third World Liberation Front, this generation of student organizers failed to align their shifting ideological priorities with curricular change. As Bryant reflected:

That year was a demoralizing year, it was a hard year from the campus perspective, not having the Presidency, I think we lost a couple seats, I do not think we had a majority on USAC that year. That throws things off like crazy.⁵⁵

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Perhaps the fault did not lie within Bryant's leadership alone, but the students' gross neglect of the larger cause. After a particularly demoralizing year, according to Bryant, students lost interest in continuing the fight for a diversity requirement. The concept of taking back USAC had become their new organizational saga and everything else was delusion.

Chapter Three: Racial Incidents in a Post Racial Landscape



Figure 1 Pao Xiong: Association of Hmong Students. Rally for diversity requirement (2010)

Campus Climate and Post Racialism

The last decade before the passage of the diversity requirement represented a new era of diversity in higher education. The state of UCLA in the 2000s-2010s focused on “pursuing diversity as a perpetual state of self-correction” that was “guided by an understanding that diversity is an intellectual and institutional project” (Chang, 2017, p. 45). It required capital and cultural investment across departments, which revived dormant tensions from the silent majority that obstructed pursuits of curricular change (Chang, 2017, p. 45).

2009-2010: Post Racial Landscape

For many, the 2008 election symbolized a paradigm shift within the United States’ racial landscape. The vibrant hues of red, cream, and blue in Shepard Fairey’s iconic Barack Obama

“Hope” poster overwhelmed many young, hopeful voters. Seemingly, the country had entered a post racial society—thereby a declining significance of race for all peoples in the United States.

However, the 2008 economic recession created financial instability within the university, prompting the institution to make budget cuts across nonessential departments and services—many of which contributed to the retention of low-income students of color. The economic recession prompted students to redirect their efforts towards protesting tuition hikes and other issues concerning affordability. Layhannara said:

People were also doing a bunch of protests around fee hikes... There was a lot happening in general with the recession so student services were being taken away. The challenge was even trying to advocate and find funding and resources for these student services, while at the same time trying to figure out what are some other more, I guess, forward moving campaigns. Some of it was let us restore some of the student services that were being taken away.⁵⁶

Some of the services in danger of being cut included: Covel Tutorials (now the Undergraduate Writing Center) maintaining library hours, advocating for fee deferment for low-income students, and advocating for Student Affairs Officer (SAO) staff hires within the American Indian Studies Center (AISC). As a result, students struggled with prioritizing their organizing efforts.

However, similar to Max’s and Vy’s efforts, students launched an internal campaign to generate excitement about the diversity requirement. As a part of one of Layhannara’s campaign platforms, she sought to pass the diversity requirement during her tenure as the Academic Affairs Commissioner when she ran and was elected on the slate, Let’s Act! However, given the

⁵⁶ L. Tep, Interview, December 13, 2017.

emergence of a post racial society, along with the instability concerning the economic recession, there appeared to be little interest in or traction for curriculum reform. This was due in large part to the diversity requirement's failure during 2004. There appeared to be little campus commitment to the idea of an undergraduate diversity requirement, some of which contributed to this idea of a post racial society where UCLA did not have a problem with diversity. There was a decline in campus-related racial incidents. There appeared to be adequate representation within the undergraduate education curriculum.

In addition, the concept of diversity was unpopular amongst academics. Many faculty members had differing opinions on the definition of diversity, the theoretical underpinnings of its merit in the curriculum, and whether the campus climate indicated need for it. During her tenure as the AAC, Layhannara focused her efforts on conducting research on the history of the ethnic and gender studies requirement at UCLA, UCLA School of Arts and Architecture's diversity requirement, and strategies deployed across other UC campuses.

Similar to the past efforts of Max, Vy, and Bryant, Layhannara sought to put together a student committee for the diversity requirement. However, there appeared to be a lack of interest due to the campus climate and the failure to pass along the institutional knowledge about its importance. By then, students appeared to have different priorities for their student organizations. To Layhannara [*italics added for emphasis*]:

It seemed like we had less participation or less active leadership... Especially when Suza worked on it and I worked on it—we always asked all the MOs to send a rep because the work did not only come from the Commission, [but] it was also the Mother Organization's responsibility, commitment. We asked each of them: "*Hey whoever is interested feels like this issue is important, send a rep.*" ... We can only bring it up so

often. We did bring it up every single time.⁵⁷

In addition to the lack of interest, there also appeared to be an implicit opposition amongst students concerning the impact of diversity-related curriculum. While some of her peers appeared to be interested in it, Layhannara said [*italics added for emphasis*]:

The diversity requirement has a tendency to polarize folks. It was not the whole org, but ...one MSA member...on the *Daily Bruin* who ended up writing a challenge piece on it without really warning. That threw us off...because as an org they were generally very supportive of it... I would also say that...there were faculty—surprisingly there were people you would think who would be for it, [but] were not... We had a few Ethnic Studies department faculty members who were opposed to seeing a diversity requirement. They did not want people... [who] were required to be in their class. They did not really see the bigger picture of this being one way where Ethnic Studies can be relevant across the board. If they are required to take some type of diversity requirement, an Ethnic Studies class could fulfill, it would make Ethnic Studies classes more necessary. It would be in higher demand. The departmental faculty members against that were like, “*I do not want people in there who do not want to be there.*” It was interesting because it was not like they were against the value of it, where some people’s issue was with the value of it, [but] they were against it because it was sacred knowledge that did not necessarily need to be forced upon anybody.⁵⁸

However, during winter 2010, the UC-system was confronted by negative press associated with an off-campus, fraternity party “Compton Cookout” at UC San Diego. The entire

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

UC-system experienced campus unrest concerning the level of racism within the UC. At UCLA, Layhannara and other student leaders used this as an opportunity to further galvanize folks to advocate for the diversity requirement. During Layhannara tenure as the AAC, she along with other student leaders, developed a strategy chart that would serve as an organizational blueprint for their advocacy efforts. In addition to their meeting and research, Layhannara and the students placed pressure on the Chancellor of the university to address racism and discrimination at UCLA. While the Compton Cookout did not occur at UCLA, the students cited this event not as an isolated incident, but as a reality many students experience on campus, but do not report. IN response, the Chancellor established for a task force to draft a proposal for the diversity requirement. After successfully winning the position of the AAC during USAC elections, Suza was slated to carry on Layhannara work. The task force was expected to meet over the summer. However, neither Suza nor Layhannara were contacted to convene with the faculty members of the committee.

Summer 2010- Fall 2011: The Principles of Community

In fall 2010, Suza assumed the role of the AAC and had taken on the task of advocating for the diversity requirement. As a continuation of their efforts the year before, Layhannara and Suza, along with other student leaders, solicited feedback and support from members of the School of Arts and Architecture. During the fall, the students put together a Student Task Force to create and finalize a proposal for the diversity requirement that would include the Principles of Community.

In a letter to the Chancellor Gene Block, the students requested an update concerning his discussion with Judith Smith and the amount of resources he committed to creating a Diversity Requirement that would reflect the Principles of Community. While they commended the

Chancellor's interest in the growth of the Ethnic Studies centers, the students challenged the brevity of his commitment. To the students, the university's failure to successfully encourage the expansion of diversity studies demonstrated the institution's inability to recognize the connection between the two.

The university could not agree upon an appropriate definition of the word "diversity." Suza recalls, "We were trying to use the Principles of Community as a foundation, as a basis for this G.E. It had something we could always go back to— 'This is what we are defining. Go back to the Principles of Community. Okay? Check.'"⁵⁹ The task force attempted to define diversity so that it would be accepted as an institutional priority and expectation of all Bruins.

During winter quarter Alexandra Wallace posted a YouTube video, *Asians in the Library*, which went viral over the weekend.⁶⁰ The video displayed racist, nativist content against Asians at UCLA. As a response, Layhannara and other students involved in APC protested the disparaging commentary and anti-Asian sentiment in the video. This, coupled with Suza's efforts as the elected AAC during the academic year 2010-2011, prompted the students to place pressure on the university to address racism and discrimination within the campus community and therefore, the need for curriculum that addressed the diverse experiences of students. Although UCLA did not ultimately pursue disciplinary action against Wallace, Chancellor Block addressed the campus community and said:

I am appalled by the thoughtless and hurtful comments of a UCLA student posted on YouTube. Like many of you, I recoil when someone invokes the right of free expression

⁵⁹ S. Khy, Interview, December 14, 2017.

⁶⁰ See more from Mashhood, F. (2011, March 18). UCLA will not take action against Alexandra Wallace. *Daily Bruin*. Retrieved from http://dailybruin.com/2011/03/18/ucla_will_not_take_action_against_alexandra_wallace/

to demean other individuals or groups. This one act certainly does not represent the views of our UCLA community. Our community is built on mutual respect and civility, and we are committed to fostering an environment that values and supports every member of the community. It is most unfortunate that a single clip on the Internet undermines that environment by expressing hurtful and shameful ideas about others in our community. I believe that speech that expresses intolerance toward any group of people on the basis of race or gender, or sexual, religious or cultural identity is indefensible and has no place at UCLA.⁶¹

Chancellor Block directed the campus community to refer to the Principles of Community as a guide of expectations for all Bruins. For the first time, UCLA had a reference to diversity as a concrete expectation rather than an intangible, idealistic concept.

To gather campus wide support for the issue, considering the lack of campus climate around the issue, during spring USAC elections, Layhannara and Suza initiated the ballot referendum, Communication Unity through Education (C.U.E.), to galvanize undergraduate support for a general education diversity requirement. C.U.E. “passed with 62.9 percent in favor” with a total of 5,337 out of a total 8,480 voter participation (Jau, 2011). Although the students’ ballot initiative indicated overwhelming student interest in the issue, the proposal for the “Community and Conflict in the Modern World” failed during the November 2011 faculty vote. Despite the progress made by Suza and Layhannara, as well as other student leaders, their successors failed to galvanize the faculty during the next academic year. Suza stated, “But there were a lot of things, people were not prioritizing it. The MOs were not prioritizing it. There was not a strong figure or there was not a leader. I did not think [they had] a strong enough leader to

⁶¹ See more from (2011). Chancellor Block appalled by student video disparaging Asians. *UCLA Newsroom*. Retrieved from <http://newsroom.ucla.edu/stories/chancellor-block-statement-199032>

galvanize everything.”⁶² Despite Layhannara’s and Suza’s efforts to build momentum, during the Fall 2011, the proposal for a course on Community and Conflict in the Modern World had failed at the faculty-vote. There was little confidence it would be revisited for several years.

Diversity as an Institutional Priority

2013-2014: Like an Avalanche

The Academic Year 2013-2014 marked a watershed moment in the campaign for a diversity requirement. During fall quarter, the campus was notified of the release of the Moreno Report,⁶³ an investigative report highlighting attitudes across faculty and staff at UCLA. In addition, the campus community was overridden by an avalanche of racist and discriminatory events with the affirmative action bake sale,⁶⁵ the posting of the Black Bruins video,⁶⁶ Law

⁶² S. Khy, Interview, December 14, 2017.

⁶³ The Moreno Report or the “Independent Investigative Report on Acts of Bias and Discrimination Involving Faculty at the University of California, Los Angeles” revealed faculty concerns over the racial climate at UCLA and its policies were inadequate to address such issues. For more information, see Moreno, C. et al. (2013). *Independent Investigative Report on Acts of Bias and Discrimination Involving Faculty at the University of California, Los Angeles*. Retrieved from <https://www.ucop.edu/moreno-report/external-review-team-report-10-15-13.pdf> or Solórzano, D. (2014). Final Report of the GSE&IS Committee on Race and Ethnic Relations. *UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies*. Retrieved from <https://portal.gseis.ucla.edu/incident-resolution/gse-is-committee-on-race-and-ethnic-relations-final-report>

⁶⁵ The affirmative action bake sale was hosted by the UCLA chapter of Young Americans for Liberty on Bruin Walk. See more from Donnelly, E. (2013, October 25). Controversial bake sale at UCLA prompts protest. *Daily Bruin*. Retrieved from <http://dailybruin.com/2013/10/25/controversial-bake-sale-at-ucla-prompts-protest/>

⁶⁶ Undergraduate students posted “The Black Bruins Video [Spoken Word]” in November 2013 on YouTube detailing disparity of Black or African American enrollment at UCLA. For more information, see Jaschik, S. (2013, November 11). To Be a Black Man at UCLA. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved from <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/11/11/students-video-leads-discussion-race-ucla>

School 33,⁶⁷ and increased reports of campus racial profiling during the academic year.

On January 31st, the AASC received a racist, misogynistic flier. AASC staff notified students involved in APC. The flier (2014) depicted disturbing and hateful imagery reminiscent of the “asian women R flier” (2012) taped on the door of the Vietnamese Student Union’s (VSU) office in Kerckhoff Hall, anti-Asian commentary from Alexandra Wallace’s YouTube video (2011), and the racist fraternity songbooks discovered in 1992.⁶⁸ In response, APC and VSU coordinated a series of actions including holding a protest in Meyerhoff Park, launching the photo campaign #BeyondtheStereotype which drew national attention, submitting a series of opinion editorials to the *Daily Bruin*, and organizing a town hall with support from student organizations at USC.⁶⁹ Drawing from past incidents specifically targeting Asian Pacific Americans on campus, as well as other incidents impacting students of color on college campuses, APC and VSU created a narrative that linked them together, suggesting the number of hateful incidents were indicative of a persistently negative, campus climate. The AASC released its own response to the flier that evoked its own familiarity with decades of struggle and

⁶⁷ During winter quarter 2014, it was revealed there were only 33 Black students out of a total enrollment of 994 at UCLA Law School. See more from Tomilowitz, S. and Hoff, S. (2014, February 10). UCLA law students protest lack of diversity. *Daily Bruin*. Retrieved from <https://dailybruin.com/2014/02/10/ucla-law-students-protest-lack-of-diversity/>

⁶⁸ In 2012, an individual anonymously posted a racist, sexist flier on the VSU’s office. This led VSU and other Asian American student organizations to hold protests at Meyerhoff Park. In 2014, the AASC received a similar flier, which compelled APC and VSU to collaborate a series of actions highlighting the inadequate response of the university and the deterioration of campus climate. See Kohli, S. and Barragan, J. (2012, November 27). Student group sign vandalized with racist, sexist slurs. *Daily Bruin*. Retrieved from <http://dailybruin.com/2012/11/27/student-group-sign-vandalized-with-racist-sexist-slurs/>

⁶⁹ The #BeyondtheStereotype campaign spread across multiple universities in the United States. Compelling Asian American students and other students of color to advocate for increased awareness on campus climate issues and lack of institutional support to address incidents of bias or discrimination.

resilience at UCLA.⁷⁰

On February 19, 2014 student organizations put together the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Islander Town Hall (LA API Town Hall)—inviting the UCLA campus community, neighboring college campuses, and the press to come together in solidarity to address the prevalence of racism towards Asian Americans. More than one hundred people signed a petition in support of the students’ list of demands. Students of APC and VSU wrote:

...We call upon the university to enact the following, which reflect proactive change for a healthy campus climate:

1. Reinstatement of a leadership development coordinator in the Asian American Studies Center as a high-priority position.
2. Implementation of a university-wide academic diversity requirement.
3. Increased representation of people of color at all levels of administration who will be able to understand and advocate for the issues of students of color.
4. Permanent investment for ethnic studies and gender studies programs.
5. Tenure for faculty of color, who have been historically underrepresented at all
6. university levels.
7. Establishment of a multicultural center that is regulated by students to promote cross-cultural engagement and understanding.
8. Disaggregated admissions and graduation rates freely available to the public....⁷¹

⁷⁰ See UCLA Asian American Studies Center (2014). “Statement on Disturbing Flyer.” Retrieved from <http://www.aasc.ucla.edu/news/flyer14.aspx>

⁷¹ Students involved in APC and VSU submitted an opinion editorial to the *Daily Bruin* and included a list of demands for the university’s administration. See Hoang, U. et al. (2014, February 19). Submission: UCLA must enact policies to improve campus climate. *Daily Bruin*. Retrieved from <http://dailybruin.com/2014/02/19/submission-ucla-must-enact-policies-to-improve-campus-climate/>

However, maintaining a month's worth of hype would prove challenging to ensure accountability following multiple meetings with administrative staff within Student Affairs. In the letter "The Impact of Proposition 209 and a Duty to our UCLA Students" addressed to the UCLA campus community, Chancellor Block wrote:

...Working within the letter of the law, we have tried to address the issues caused by Proposition 209. In recent years, UCLA has begun evaluating the full range of each applicant's academic and personal achievements, within the context of opportunities and challenges each has faced. And yet we continue to fall far short of the diversity California's public colleges and universities enjoyed before voters approved Proposition 209 in 1996....We must do more. We have a responsibility to do better...Today I call upon my UCLA faculty colleagues to re-examine the creation of an undergraduate general education requirement focused on diversity. Ours is the only UC campus that does not have one. We have no excuses. Let's make this happen in 2014....Try as we might to overcome racism, bigotry, isolation and anger, we know we're going to confront them again, on our campus and in the world beyond. The offensive flyer sent to our Asian American Studies Center recently was another horrifying reminder. What matters is how we respond...⁷²

Following Chancellor Block's directive, the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Scott Waugh committed human and financial resources to creating a taskforce under the College of Letters & Science Academic Senate. Belinda Tucker, Vice Provost of the Institute of Arts and Cultures and Professor Michael Alfaro from the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary

⁷² See more from Block, G. (2014, February 24). The Impact of Proposition 209 and our Duty to our Students. *UCLA Office of the Chancellor*. Retrieved from <https://chancellor.ucla.edu/messages/the-impact-of-proposition-209-and-our-duty-to-our-students/>

Biology were appointed as Co-Chairs of the Committee for Diversity Initiative (CDI).

While reflecting on previous efforts, the Chair of the Faculty Executive Committee Theresa Palmer recognized a need for student input throughout this process. By May 2014, the Taskforce for a Diversity Requirement created a Student Advisory Board consisting of 16 undergraduate students to work collaboratively with faculty members on CDI. Many of the representatives recommended by Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Janina Montero served in leadership roles on USAC and the MOs—demonstrating commitment to issues of diversity.

While student interest appeared high during the initial meeting, critical periods for the CDI depended on drafting a proposal ready for review before fall quarter, thus, occurring over several meetings during the summer—where it was more likely for students to return home for vacation rather than stay on campus. Timing allocated for the drafting period presented concerns regarding student input and representation due to past proposals excluding students from the process entirely or allowing for minimal input. As a consequence, only a few students remained in Los Angeles to attend these sessions. Jazz was perhaps the only one out of 16 students to attend every planning meeting. By the end of the summer, CDI submitted a proposal for a one-course, general education requirement titled the “Diversity Requirement.” The committee included a list of courses that would satisfy the Diversity Requirement based on the following criteria: engaging in the histories, cultures or social conditions of peoples who may experience marginalization. The proposal was approved by the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) and Undergraduate Council of the Academic Senate and would later progress to the College of Letters & Science faculty-vote and the Legislative Assembly.

2014-2015: “YES!” on Diversity



Figure 2 Staff Meeting, Asian Pacific Coalition in Campbell 3221 (April 2015).

Before fall quarter, student organizations APC and VSU developed a student-led campaign to mobilize professors to participate in the upcoming faculty online vote. Scheduled mid-October to October 31st, Jazz and the President of VSU sought out student leadership from other student organizations. Both Presidents from the Pacific Islands' Student Association (PISA) and American Indian Student Association (AISA) had pledged their commitment to the campaign. Together, four of the nine MO Chairs worked collaboratively with CDI to establish a campaign strategy to galvanize the faculty community. With the support of CDI Co-Chairs Belinda Tucker and Michael Alfaro, students created a strategic timeline to reach 1,000 professors using a postcard campaign.

Unlike past efforts, the students were able to leverage their collaborative relationships within CDI, with the Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education, Institute of American Cultures and the USAC AAC. They received staff support from the Office of the Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education with designing some of the campaign materials, printing, and internal communication amongst the faculty. They relied on mobilizing structures like the AASC, CPO, and AAC that provided additional support for the students to educate their peers on the issue and invite them to lobby their faculty to vote “YES!” on diversity. Particularly because faculty turnout for elections and within the Academic Senate has been historically low. The students and CDI wanted to frame outreach efforts that would bring the students’ messages to the faculty. Jazz explained:

[We] created postcards with a design on the front [and] room on the back so students can write personalized messages to professors—to engage them in voting. We spent many weeks, not only getting students to sign postcards, but [also] delivering those postcards to faculty mailboxes. [We] targeted specific departments that we knew would be supportive of the requirement and needed to remind them to vote. As well as targeting those departments where traditionally, they did not really have a say in social justice issues. When the week of October came—we made final pushes with visiting professors in person, emailing professors, and just flogging with hundreds and hundreds of postcards on campus.⁷³

They hoped that deploying student voices as an organizing tactic would compel faculty members to vote in favor of the students’ desires rather than solely on the basis of their opinion.

Throughout the campaign for an ethnic and gender studies requirement, proposals met

⁷³ J. Kiang, Interview, December 4, 2015.

opposition from students and faculty members who questioned the merits of the course(s). More conservative students from Bruin Republicans, a registered student organization, submitted opinion editorials to the *Daily Bruin* imploring students to lobby their faculty to vote “NO!” on this ballot initiative. Also, a handful of professors vehemently opposed the requirement for a significant portion of this effort. Professor Thomas Schwartz led a small group of faculty including Professors Eric Gans, Matthew Malkan, Marc Trachtenberg, Joseph Manson and Professor Emeritus Jascha Kessler. They challenged the requirement’s progress at each stage, citing academic freedom, feasibility based on resources, and increased burden on students’ graduation. In an opinion editorial for the campus newspaper, Thomas Schwartz wrote, “What you are buying is a pig in a poke. It is sucking up resources to pay for this ideological puffery” (Levin, 2014). Additionally, faculty members claimed it was not within the university’s right to promote particular ideologies that would place liberal bias on students. Jazz reflects:

...[they] called us, as student organizers and even me, as an individual, a ‘bully that is attempting to promote my liberal agenda onto this campus and to infect the student body with a liberal education.’ Some of their other talking points were: A Diversity Requirement is not financially possible, in which it would take up too many resources and that there would not be enough seats for students to be able fulfill such a requirement. Both being myths that with enough research [from] faculty on our end, in support of the requirement, proved were completely untrue.⁷⁴

While he referred to students leading the charge for the Diversity Requirement being called bullies, many had interpreted his and his peers’ opposition as behaviors indicative of defending their political-orientation being in the minority. For Professor Schwartz and some of his

⁷⁴ Ibid.

colleagues, the Diversity Requirement represented an effort from the left to silence the right.

The Diversity Requirement had narrowly passed with a count of 332 “FOR” and 303 “AGAINST” and 24 left blank. It would therefore advance to the Academic Senate Legislative Assembly. Initially overcome with disbelief, given the slim margin of victory, students involved with APC, VSU, PISA, and AISA planned a campus wide, celebratory barbecue in Wilson Plaza on November 4, 2014. The Student Activities Center was adorned with banners—proclaiming victory—while the sounds of ‘90s hip hop and R&B competed with the voices of students celebrating amongst friends, faculty members, and staff.

The Diversity Requirement victory barbecue highlighted the students in APC, VSU, AISA, and PISA as the organizing powerhouses of the university. Standing elbow to elbow on the steps of the Student Activities Center, student leaders from VSU, PISA, AISA, and Jazz passed the microphone in succession as their words of congratulations ricocheted off the staggering columns of SAC. Towering over Wilson Plaza, all four columns were draped with black, glossed banners reading, “We did it!” It was clear that Student Affairs administrators and the remaining campus community looked to them and their organizations as the ones who led the charge for the Diversity Requirement.

One week after the College faculty-vote and the celebratory barbecue—the proposal was scheduled for another Academic Senate vote. It had moved on to the forum of the Academic Senate Legislative Assembly—the official governing body of representatives from all academic departments, including schools outside of the College of Letters & Science. Traditionally, students have been included in this voting body based on their appointments from the USAC AAC. Nevertheless, this vote was considered to be procedural, as measures passed by the respective school or college are generally upheld by the Academic Senate Legislative Assembly.

However, given the highly publicized conflict between the faculty and students, members of the CDI anticipated additional challenges during the Legislative Assembly. In an unprecedented move, CDI invited Jazz to attend the forum, despite not having an active appointment from the USAC AAC. Jazz said:

I think it was because [of] the work of the professors that were adamantly against the Diversity Requirement. [They] [seemed to be] pressuring the Academic Senate Chair, Professor Joel Aberbach. On the agenda, rather than having a procedural vote that would normally respect any previous vote, was a town hall-style pro and con kind of testimonial. In which there was an allotted amount of time where members, present at that meeting, would go up to the microphone and speak their support or their disapproval of the Diversity Requirement.⁷⁵

As a response, the CDI Taskforce organized 50 professors to provide a crafted public comment in support of the Diversity Requirement to demonstrate their organizational strength on the issue. Jazz was also invited to share a few words to the Senate Assembly:

I urged them to respect what the students have worked so hard for. To remind them that a vote had already happened and that it is their job to go with that vote. And as professors, if students in your classes are telling you that ‘this is what they want,’ it is your responsibility to take what they are telling you and advocate for them in a space that they don’t have access to...I was very fortunate to be able to be invited and to be petitioned for. To be present at that meeting. But I think also that was crucial to really showcase that it was “me” that was representative of the students. Not from student government.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

In many ways, Jazz's presence exposed the arbitrary value of AAC appointments. It also reinforced APC's organizational saga—being the most consistent student organization to be dedicated to this issue. Additionally, it demonstrated that Asian American students had been at the forefront of this issue from both the perspective of Student Affairs and the Academic Senate.

The final vote count from the Academic Senate Legislative Assembly was stated as follows: 85 “FOR,” 17 “AGAINST,” and a few “ABSTAIN.” The measure passed, despite the six-opposing faculty's demand for a second vote.⁷⁷

Winter 2015-Spring 2015: Jumping on the Diversity Bandwagon

One month later, the Taskforce for a Diversity Requirement was notified of a circulating petition—signed by 59 professors—invoking an Academic Senate Bylaw that had not been consulted since the university's decision to transition from a semester to quarter system. The bylaw stipulated that academic policy changes may allow for all eligible voting faculty across campus, including faculty emeriti, to vote for legislation presented at the Legislative Assembly.⁷⁸ This would allow the voting pool to increase from 1,000 to 3,000 faculty members, both active and inactive UCLA affiliates. This provocation would prompt a second voting period that would undermine the previous faculty-vote in October and its successive vote within the Legislative

⁷⁷ Bylaw 155 (B) Subject to the provisions of subsection (A) above, action taken by the Legislative Assembly shall be submitted to a mail or electronic online ballot of voting members of the Division if: [Am 08 Apr 03] (1) the request for the mail or electronic online ballot is made at the meeting at which the issue has been considered and one-third of the members of the Legislative Assembly present join in the request; or [Am 08 Apr 03]. See Bylaws. *UCLA Academic Senate*. Retrieved from <http://www.senate.ucla.edu/FormsDocs/bylaws/ch5-2.htm#b130>

⁷⁸ Bylaw 155 (B) (2) written petition by voting members equal to one-third of the members of the Legislative Assembly is received, singly or collectively by the Chair within 10 instructional days after the distribution of the minutes. [Am 11 Apr 79, 28 May 98] See Bylaws. *UCLA Academic Senate*. Retrieved from <http://www.senate.ucla.edu/FormsDocs/bylaws/ch5-2.htm#b130>

Assembly, rendering the body of the Legislative Assembly irrelevant. Jazz shared:

There was a bit more drama here, too, because the petition had errors. [However], the Academic Senate Chair allowed for the professors to retract that petition and submit a revised one. It proved the Senate was compromised—taking such a biased position of not wanting to approve the Diversity Requirement. [There was] of course this frustration and anger and feelings of “how much is this bureaucracy going to limit us in getting this done?” But on a more mental and emotional level, we were all burnt out. Most of us had spent so much time on this campaign. And even some of us, during the month of October, were working on another campaign to fight for additional [services] for our student-run programs that support students of color on this campus... We ran two campaigns at the same time in fall quarter of 2014. We were burnt out. We had already skipped so many of our classes. We were not doing well in school. We spent money. In a way, we felt defeated because it was like we had the first taste of victory, but it was wiped away in just a flick of the wrist.⁷⁹

By the end of fall quarter, students and faculty members of the CDI received confirmation that the faculty-wide vote would occur spring 2015. Over winter break, CDI Co-chairs Belinda Tucker and Michael Alfaro pursued legal consultation to confirm whether the Bylaw determination was lawful. While unprecedented, the Bylaw invocation was deemed constitutional and would therefore result in a re-vote scheduled for April 14, 2015. However, there was a high possibility that the entire faculty body were unaware of the revote, given the previous results. Therefore, to be impactful, campaigning efforts needed to be more creative and more rigorous.

⁷⁹ J. Kiang, Interview, December 4, 2015.

By winter 2015 students of the APC, VSU, PISA, and AISA found themselves exhausted from their fall campaign efforts. Nearly a year's worth of organizing followed by ten weeks of intensive campaigning, students' felt demoralized after feeling they were on top of the university. Jazz said:

We were very unmotivated to realize that we had to fight again. But eventually, we had to push ourselves to write again. Writing again to submit good pieces⁸⁰ into the *Daily Bruin* about how this re-vote was not only UCLA's bureaucratic process showing how difficult it is to make change happen, but also how racism itself was being legitimized on this level. How [could] a petition signed by so few professors get this much traction? We got smaller because so many people were not in the loop of things. Many students on-campus did not know this re-vote was happening. They thought it was done because of the November [celebrations]. By this time, we realized the reexamination of the by-laws was not gonna work and that the Academic Senate Chair was not going to go back on his word. We started from scratch once again and modeled the campaign off of what we did fall quarter. We redid the postcards. But this time—we got t-shirts and tank tops and sort of made it like a full-blown campaign with swag.⁸¹

Many faculty and staff expressed concerns regarding the over commitment of students, citing their behaviors—induced stress, anxiety, depression, and attrition—as symptomatic of over catastrophizing the stakes. Many believed the Diversity Requirement was going to pass.

However, the motives behind their level of commitment were based on their fundamental distrust

⁸⁰ See more from Kiang, J. et al. (2015, February 18). Submission: Racism in UCLA bureaucracy hinders diversity requirement passage. *Daily Bruin*. Retrieved from <http://dailybruin.com/2015/02/18/racism-in-ucla-bureaucracy-hinders-diversity-requirement-passage/>

⁸¹ J. Kiang, Interview, December 4, 2015.

across administration, faculty, staff, and students whose intentions appeared less than pure.

Jazz and the other students conscientiously excluded the remaining MO Chairs out of paranoia and distrust grounded in issues that resurfaced within the MO Coalition. These were comparable to, if not an extension of, the student conflict that emerged during the MO Coalition splitting off from Praxis to form M2K in 2000. There was a different vision across the MOs for what student government meant and what it could accomplish.

Students from APC, VSU, PISA, and AISA embodied the beliefs where “the cadre of believers helps to effect the legend, then to protect it against later leaders and other new participants who, less pure in belief, might turn [it] in some other direction” (Clark, 1972, p. 181). Younger students were more likely to be amenable to over-embellished, misleading stories coming from student organizations who had not been consistent in this effort.

Jazz shared:

Students from USAC became more engaged, as well as from student organizations that did not care beforehand. I think it all came with timing because as you move forward with winter quarter you start thinking of spring quarter. And what happens in spring quarter? Student government elections. With this issue still being on the table, [the] most important issue of the year to the entire university, everyone wanted a piece of it to say, “I have credibility because I am working on this.” It gave another opportunity for folks who wanted to pursue student government to get involved and be able to utilize [it] as a point to their qualifications to represent the student body.⁸²

Students affiliated with organizations that did not remain consistently devoted to the struggle attempted to develop their own saga—an embellished story of their organization’s involvement

⁸² Ibid.

in this successful accomplishment. However, to maintain autonomy over their advocacy efforts, Jazz and the other student leaders sought to disavow alternative agendas:

We, as the organizers the entire time, combated that by working with the folks that were genuinely interested. But very much acknowledging that some people were interested in it for the wrong reasons. [Therefore,] we maintained our own autonomy over the postcard campaign. We maintained autonomy over what the statements in the *Daily Bruin*, from our camp, were saying. Indeed, there was an effort to make it seem like it wasn't our four organizations that were doing the work.⁸³

In many aspects, students across all fronts carried inherent assumptions about one another's legitimacy. Nevertheless, it appeared the campus had witnessed a resurgence of student advocacy dedicated to passing the Diversity Requirement.

The faculty-wide vote concluded near the end of the April with the results: 916 votes "FOR," 400 votes "AGAINST," and 50 votes to "ABSTAIN." During the vote count, the prominent student leaders were away from UCLA campus to present at the Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education (APAHE) Conference on the longevity of Asian Pacific American student activism for the Colleges of Letters & Science Diversity Requirement. They did not receive the results until after they had finished their panel and were en route to the hotel.

⁸³ Ibid.

Conclusion: Three Decades of Student Advocacy



Figure 3 Layhannara Tep: Diversity Requirement BBQ (April 2015).

“We Did It!”

Tuesday, early evening. Hundreds of students chatter in line for hot dogs and hamburgers while others shuffle onto the concrete, moving to the melodic sounds of ‘90s hip hop and R&B. Dozens of tables are spread across the grassy patches of Wilson Plaza for students to huddle together, but additional bodies decide to settle onto the grass while others search for vacant spots on SAC steps. It is a familiar set-up from the first barbecue sponsored nearly six months ago. On April 21, the CPO sponsored the second Diversity Requirement Victory Barbecue to celebrate three decades of student advocacy. The four columns of SAC are once again draped with posters

stating, “Finally!” “We did it!” “Victory!” To the immediate right, a large banner sweeps across the exposed brick featuring a condensed timeline of the Diversity Requirement. Starting from 1985 to April 2015, students were overwhelmed by a culmination of three decades of student advocacy. It had been four days since the faculty wide vote ended on Friday, April 17, 2015. Amongst the vivacity of the students, food, and music, the CPO’s Writing Success Program Director walks towards an a-board signage and reads, “After 30 years of student activism, the Diversity Requirement has finally passed.” The swell of emotions envelops her as she separates herself from her professional role and welcomes memories of her student organizing as the AAC 2009-10 and APC Director 2010-11. Layhannara looks to the SAC steps and takes note of the student leaders addressing the throngs of people. Multiple generations of student leaders stood there in the convergence of space and time. Their contributions to continuing three decades of student advocacy are formidably tied to the legacies of Ethnic Studies and to the contributions of the AASC.

Commitment to the Lore

In many cases, students made the conscientious effort to enhance their organizational saga by rooting their causes and values in Ethnic Studies. Heavily influenced by the AAM and the TWLF, students operated in awe of the movement history and of the contributions of their mentors on campus. Perhaps this suggests why at the time students aligned themselves with the Ethnic Studies centers. As the birthplace of Ethnic Studies programs, an incubator for leadership development, and base for political operations, the center operated as a nexus for social change. Having access to mentors from the AAM allowed students to assert a legitimate claim to the Ethnic Studies movement. To a certain degree, this gave students the political leverage to rise to power and demand institutional commitment to diversity and to define diversity under the

auspices of representation at both the curricular and admissions level. Therefore, to demand a diversity-course requirement, the study of marginalized experiences, symbolized a larger recognition for admissions and retention of students of color.

History gets passed down but it is hard to verify. You trust your predecessors and you trust your organizational documents. There was a certain degree of glory involved in being attached to an organization and being a predecessor of key student leaders. There was a desire to contribute to that legacy because if you did not, you failed to fill the shoes of the predecessors who have done so much. For some, guilt and disappointment did not come from their own efforts, but from their successors. Thus, there was a level of responsibility over the actions of the next generation and whether they lived up to preserving the saga. As Suza put it, “I dedicated two years, minimum, of my life. I stayed an extra year for the diversity requirement. I could have graduated earlier, but I decided to stay because I was down for the cause. I sacrificed time, money, you name it—so I was very happy to see it has not died.”⁸⁴

Therefore, the power of student lore cannot only be understood as a variable, but a necessary component that maintained student advocacy efforts. There was an inherent assumption about whose cause was just. Whose organization had the most legitimacy to continue the charge. And even most importantly, the unspoken rivalry between students which manifested from the disbursement of power across ethnic groups and student organizations. As Max had put it:

...if you think about student groups as the organizing force behind...some of the folks who got elected in student government, it is they [who] are the ones informing and making sure it is on the table... But I could be wrong, I was not a part of the efforts that

⁸⁴ S. Khy, Interview, December 14, 2017.

came after... There could be student government leaders [who] care about it, but the consistency around ensuring that the issue was on the table, I think, came from the student groups because they were the ones who had continued to talk about it and fight for it.⁸⁵

Not only were students engaging in battles against more conservative forces within the university, but also waging battle against one another to preserve the organizational saga. And in many cases, it had reinforced the notion that the organization had become the reality and the external forces at play were not necessarily delusion, but less important to their cause.

One year after its passage, Jazz reflected upon students' attempts to write themselves into campaign advocacy efforts:

Last year, it became very clear that the university was backing it. It became this reality that it was very likely for it pass. Everyone wanted to jump on board. People wanted to say, "I was a part of it." And so, the organizing activities, we had students who previously did not give a damn about it saying, "Hey everyone! Email your professors!" And in many cases, they didn't even call the Diversity Requirement by its actual name because they mistook it for something else. When change became tangible, everyone wanted to be a part of it. There is a racial politic that disposes Asian American narratives already. When you mix those two together, of course, it plays out as an erasure of Asian American input and leadership in the campaign.⁸⁶

At the university level, the growth of Asian American Studies remained formidably linked to the power of claiming ownership over one's political identity. For Asian American

⁸⁵ M. Espinoza, Interview, December 9, 2017.

⁸⁶ J. Kiang, Interview, December 4, 2015.

student leaders, curriculum change was of importance in regard to building power because we could never be in the front. Therefore, we sought to build power through alternative, meaningful avenues that may have been seen as less appealing to other identity-based student organizations who shifted their focus towards student government politics. Considering the coordination and impact of the APLCC as directly linked to Asian American students fighting for an ethnic and gender studies requirement, curriculum change became a proxy for building power. Thus, by virtue, Ethnic Studies became powerful. Despite these linkages, Asian American Studies has continued to grow and simultaneously, experienced challenges at UCLA.

Today, the AASC's operational budget has faced considerable cuts—forcing many of the staff to work part-time or remotely. Other positions have remained vacant due to permanent hiring freezes. Older, prominent staff who served as leaders in the AAM and pioneers of Asian American Studies have entered retirement. In 2016, Professor Don Nakanishi unexpectedly left this world—with the future of the AASC remaining unknown.

I cannot assert my own understandings beyond what I have laid out in this work nor can I predict the future of the AASD and AASC. Instead, offer this thesis as a reaffirmation of the following truth: Asian American Studies and Asian American students have always been at the forefront of this issue. Asian American Studies and Ethnic Studies need to be protected and have access to their students. Therefore, I look forward to seeing whether the university acknowledges Ethnic Studies during its centennial campaign, as the AASC approaches its 50th anniversary.

Reflections

UCLA is the second to last campus to adopt an ethnic and gender studies requirement. It has been three years since the UCLA College of Letters & Science Diversity Requirement has passed through the Academic Senate. Its passage marks a significant moment in our campus

history. The longevity of this effort not only demonstrates the impressive stamina of student advocacy despite the ebbs and flows of the organizing tides, but also is largely symbolic of the institution's triumph over the concept of time. If considering this from an Education framework, its passage is not indicative of an isomorphic phenomenon where institutions are compelled to incorporate change in order to push the university forward. Neither can the creation of taskforces, in response to incidents, be seen solely as a victory for the campus community. Rather, it can be seen also as a symbolic commitment that serves as a temporary buffer zone for critique executive administrators may get.

Although challenging with my limited timeframe and capacity as a graduate student, I have been honored to begin this process of formally documenting the student organizing behind UCLA's Diversity Requirement. When I was an undergraduate between 2012 and 2014, my organizing work at the time to advocate for a renewed Diversity Requirement proposal largely operated without the rich memories shared through the interviews and documents gathered for this thesis. Despite the general history passed down through our organizations' respective sagas, this reality limited my peers' and my appreciation of the work that pushed the needle forward up until our contemporary activism. Therefore, I cannot begin to convey how deeply illuminating this process has been. Without the contributions of those who have come before me, I would complicity forgo the rich history of their achievements and struggles for curricular reform.

While many of the younger generations of students may not understand the historical legacy of this undergraduate general education requirement, both graduate students and students involved in student organizations continue to be interested in the longevity of advocacy before its passage. Mistakenly, younger generations of students lay claim to the victory of the Diversity Requirement.

I cannot offer an exact blueprint detailing the three-decades of student advocacy. However, I have been able to draw connections between seemingly disconnected experiences, across space and time. Throughout the past 30 years, students were able to reinvent the movement for UCLA's Diversity Requirement based off of what was feasible for them at their respective times. Rooted in the historic legacy of the AAM, Asian American students have linked their classroom experience in Asian American Studies by participating in student organizations. As a consequence, such participations have prompted students to buy-in to their organizational saga and to become invested in curricular reform. While there were periods of stagnation due to conflicting priorities, students were able to reinvent the movement by cultivating relationships with former and new allies, as well as recognize institutional barriers that would impact their success. In addition, the transmission of knowledge is critical in helping with organizational gaps. Therefore, students must maintain a sense of humility and reach out to key alumni for institutional knowledge and support, as there are many more battles to come and many more policy changes ahead.

For organizers in real-time social movements, it is not uncommon for artifacts and memories to be lost in the minutia of agenda-setting, resource-gathering, participant-recruiting, and more. For student organizers particularly, being limited to a relatively short amount of time on campus—and with a specific student organization—can further limit the preservation of these physical and intangible treasures. As a student organizer, beforehand, near the tail-end of the Diversity Requirement's three-decade effort, I was fortunate to have benefitted from having access to certain treasures (e.g., alumni presence, archived documents). As a graduate student now conducting research on this movement, I have valued these treasures even more in motivating me to complete this thesis as well as in providing me much of the historical details to

which I am able to share in writing. Though I will always be indebted to my interview participants, the AASC staff who helped pull archival materials, and the alumni who supported my past organizing throughout the years, I recognize, however, that one student (myself) should not be the sole beneficiary of these treasures.

As an alumna of student organizations, I have an incredible responsibility to continue the passage of institutional knowledge to the new, hopeful generation of student leaders. Regardless of whether or not we may remain connected or considered valuable resources to the new generations of students involved in our organizations, they too, have inherited an expansive legacy of institutional change. However, while it is important to reaffirm the role of Asian American students as the consistent student leaders in the three-decade effort to pass the Diversity Requirement, perhaps it is more valuable to consider the realities beyond the organizational saga that continues to be perpetuated. And perhaps, it is useful to recognize our own mistakes, shortcomings, and missed opportunities whilst in pursuit of keeping the organizational saga alive.

Sound bites to include inclusive language in descriptions of undergraduate curriculum are not a proxy for three decades of struggle to achieve a commitment, clear definition, and representation of diversity. Offices do not empower campaigns, nor do they necessarily guarantee impactful progress using the proper channels. However, they can prove useful if holders of office decide to allocate resources to ongoing efforts or to elevate the voices of those who have been committed to the work thus far. Max, Vy, Bryant, Layhannara, and Suza are symbolic of the latter. As representatives elected by students of color on campus, each harnessed the tools of their office in support of the campaign for an ethnic and gender studies requirement. After their tenure in the Office of the AAC, many assumed leadership positions in APC to

continue this effort. However, Jazz's contributions symbolize the arbitrary value students place on student government offices as the necessary tool to make institutional change.

With this thesis, I ultimately hope that future students who walk the stairs of Campbell Hall—or any UCLA building, for that matter—will also find value in the past in order to understand the circumstances they grapple with. With regard to the permanent nature of this movement's victories, I have high hopes that all future undergraduate students at UCLA will be taking diversity-related courses. As of now, it seems unlikely that a reversal of these curricular efforts would occur. In fact, UCLA seems proud of this accomplishment now and routinely advertised the institutional victory during its first year. As the first cohort of Diversity Requirement-taking freshmen students near graduation, I can only imagine that institutional self-assessment efforts will produce positive data and statements in the near future. Therefore, for these future students, an ahistorical record of why they take have a Diversity Requirement would be detrimental to the legacies left by previous generations of student leaders who reinvented their campaigns throughout the years. Regardless of positive or critical messaging, a future where students assume that the Diversity Requirement was an agenda item from UCLA administration would be both erroneous and unfortunate. I principally hope this thesis becomes a record of the student leadership that was consistent throughout the Diversity Requirement movement, despite potential revisions to an institutionalized narrative that may emerge later.

Additionally, I believe that future students of color will identify political battles that they could use historical guidance with. While earlier eras of student organizing are crucial to the larger timeline of events for students of color at the college level, having an “updated” record of movement efforts, like UCLA's Diversity Requirement, can offer unique lessons that can more directly relate to contemporary circumstances. Like how many of my interview participants

referred to past struggles for Ethnic Studies for how they framed their organizing efforts for the Diversity Requirement, whatever is next on the horizon can look towards this thesis (and hopefully other accounts and future published work) to continue reinvention of strategies.

For myself and whoever else finds value in this area of research, I believe we have only started uncovering the soil to this movement's roots. Perhaps future research can include examining the impact of Ethnic Studies on the identity formation, political consciousness, and leadership and advocacy within institutions of higher education. It would also be equally as valuable to examine the political relationships between organizations, student government, and shifting circumstances within the campus context. Other expanded works would also be more in-depth on Proposition 209 or other external changes and how they affected student demographics and shifted power relations across students of color. In addition, it may be worthwhile to assess changes in Student Affairs, student services, and the role of student organizations.

After 30 years, the Diversity Requirement has finally become a part of the organizational saga of UCLA. However, the three-decade effort for the UCLA College of Letters & Science Diversity Requirement relied on the labor of generations of Asian American student leaders. Therefore, as we look towards the future of student organizing, it is important to remember those who have come before us.

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