

San Diego Chicano/Latino Concilio on Higher Education San Diego, California

Notes from meeting with representatives of California State University San Marcos
April 8, 2024

To Patricia Olmos-Prado:

Thank you for facilitating the April 8 meeting between your leadership team and our SD Concilio. We offer the following notes for your consideration.

Present (CSUSM): Patricia Olmos-Prado, Viridiana Diaz, Carl Kemnitz, Aswad Allen, Alan Brian, Erik Ramirez, Donna San Miguel.

(SD Concilio): Maria Figueroa, Alberto Ochoa, Isidro Ortiz, Eduardo Aguilar.

The SD Concilio provided context: it's 2023 report and follow-up meetings with local college and universities leaderships, it's 2024 report focusing on the local data included in the report by the Campaign for College Opportunity. Today's agenda focuses on the hiring and retention of Chicano/Latino faculty, the status of Chicana & Chicano Studies, and strategies for Chicano/Latino student success at CSUSM.

Carl Kemnitz, provost and VPAA, reported:

- The role of CSUSM is that of an "access institution," less selective than SDSU.
- Our students are more successful when the faculty reflects them.
- Diversifying the faculty is a challenge; Proposition 209 is one impediment. There are a small number of Chicanos/Latinos earning a Ph.D.
- It is important to not introduce bias in the search process. All search committee members receive diversity training. We advertise in places with a diverse audience.
- Candidates are evaluated for their cultural competence. Interviews emphasize a welcoming, inclusive campus at CSUSM.
- Faculty retention is important. All academic departments have a retention plan.
- DEI is embedded in the CSUSM strategic plan. Each college has a plan for hiring diverse faculty.
- There has been discussion of cluster hiring to increase faculty diversity. One cluster hire resulted in the hiring of eight new faculty that teach and/or do research on DEI issues. CSUSM will seek to conduct another cluster hire when feasible.

Aswad Allen, CEO of DEI, reported:

- Institutional diversity plans and the campus strategic plan are intertwined; both feature inclusive excellence. The CEO of DEI works with academic deans and department heads, using metrics to move diversity forward.

- CSUSM is institutionalizing standards in its hiring process. There are discussions of how to bring equity to classroom pedagogy.
- There are intersegmental dialogues that include North County institutions.

Carl Kemnitz reported:

- CSUSM recently added Ethnic Studies as an upper division requirement. Three diversity courses, including one Ethnic Studies course, are required for graduation.
- Any of the three area studies courses—African American Studies, American Indian Studies, Chicana & Chicano Studies—meets the Ethnic Studies requirement.
- There are discussions to revisit a proposal for Chicana & Chicano Studies.
- General education courses facilitate recruitment of majors.
- A college dean funded three faculty positions for Chicana & Chicano Studies; it will be considered by the academic senate and will hopefully launch next year.

Viridana Diaz, Vice President of Student Affairs, reported:

- CSUSM established a new position on campus initiatives and partnerships with a focus on Chicano/Latino student initiatives.
- The campus is developing a grant (five years, received in 2023) with three components, including student “onboarding,” student engagement and retention with an equity lens, faculty development, and learning communities.
- The campus hosts bilingual education fairs and community partnerships.
- CSUSM was awarded the “Seal of Excelencia” from Excelencia in Education. We are trying to institutionalize its elements.
- Our HSI summit featured Dr. Tara Yosso as a keynote speaker.
- The campus’ approach to servingness includes the incorporation of community cultural wealth and culturally relevant pedagogy.

Erik Ramirez from Student Affairs Divisional Partnerships reported:

- At my previous position at Sacramento State, we established a partnership with Univision and sponsored an education fair focusing on developing a college-going culture, including the family role.

Alan Brian from Student Affairs Planning and Assessment reported:

- In June 2024, CSUSM will apply for continuation of its Seal of Excelencia.
- We will document our overarching strategies to serve Chicano/Latino students and our indicators of student success. We will share our application with the SD Concilio.

We thank you for hosting and facilitating our meeting. Also, many thanks to Donna San Miguel for coordinating the schedules of so many people to make the meeting possible.

Sinceramente,

Patrick Velasquez
Co-Chair, SD Concilio