

October 31, 2023

VIA EMAIL

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

TO: Sunita Cooke
President, Mira Costa College

Thank you for meeting with our SD Concilio on October 23, 2023. We enjoyed meeting some of your leadership team and receiving an update on your institutional strategies to increase the success of Chicano/Latino students at Mira Costa College.

We would like to share our notes from the meeting regarding our SD Concilio's priorities:

Hiring of Diverse Faculty

- Mira Costa has its first Title V grant. The Challenge Foundation will raise matching funds.
- Mira Costa's enrollment is now 42 percent Chicano/Latino students.
- The college has identified institutions that graduate certain Masters Degree students so they can be recruited for faculty positions at Mira Costa.
- The students served by Mira Costa are centered in faculty job descriptions. Hiring practices seek to eliminate bias.
- Four of the five most recent faculty hires at Mira Costa have been Chicano/Latino. Among all employees hired in 2022-23, 52 percent were Chicano/Latino.
- Chicano/Latino faculty now make up 17 percent of Mira Costa's faculty.
- The college works on retention of its diverse faculty. New faculty are invited to monthly meetings and are assigned a mentor for their first year.
- Mira Costa has an EEO grant. Its administration works in collaboration with academic senate leadership. The senate partners with Human Resources for faculty training and the faculty selection process.

Law Enforcement on Campus

- In terms of campus law enforcement, the college analyzes data on the characteristics of those who are detained and/or arrested by campus police. There is a Police Advisory Committee at Mira Costa.

Ethnic Studies

- Culturally relevant pedagogy is being infused throughout the college's curriculum.
- Ethnic Studies at Mira Costa is not yet where it should be, but the college is making progress.
- The college hired its first Ethnic Studies faculty. It has a Social Justice Degree for Transfer with an emphasis on the Chicana & Chicano experience.

- Mira Costa has its first Ethnic Studies course and other courses that focus on Chicanos/Latinos.
- Four disciplinary courses have been revised.
- Mira Costa hopes to hire other Ethnic Studies faculty; it is an institutional priority.

The Puente Program

- Mira Costa has two Puente Program cohorts with both classes full. The cohorts were formed during the Covid lockdown.
- Dedicated spaces are important to the college. A “La Raza Center” will open in 2026 with space for Puente as well as the “Uprise” program for undocumented students.

Please let me know if any of these notes are erroneous and/or if we omitted any salient points.

The strategies being implemented at Mira Costa are impressive and indicative of an institutional focus on Chicanos/Latinos and other historically underrepresented students. We appreciate your transparency, and we look forward to our continued dialogue.

Sinceramente,

Patrick Velasquez
Co-Chair, San Diego Concilio