



A Bill in Support of Public Education and the ACES Program

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Sponsor

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WHEREAS, the mission statement of the UC system states “The distinctive mission of the University is to serve society as a center of higher learning, providing long-term societal benefits... and provide other kinds of societal benefit”¹, and,

WHEREAS, UC Berkeley was founded as a marriage of a Land-grant public institution and a state run institution with the purpose of advancing generations and the communities of California², and,

WHEREAS, in the wake of budget problems increasing amounts of funding are coming from private institutions and tuition, instead of from state funding and this challenges the core of what it means to be a public institution,³ and,

WHEREAS, as public institutions search for their roots regarding their public character, it is increasingly important for educators and systems of education to understand the democratic potential of education rooted in a culture of questioning and personal experience⁴, and

WHEREAS, the practices of a public institution should be concerned foremost with the lived experience and empowerment of the majority of students who define this campus, and,

WHEREAS, our education should not strictly have knowledge as an end goal, but instead should use partnerships with local communities that produce knowledge through the shared experience of students and community members, and,

¹ <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/aboutuc/missionstatement.html>

² <http://www.berkeley.edu/about/hist/foundations.shtml>

³ <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/aug/22/local/la-me-college-pay-20110822>

⁴ <http://chronicle.com/article/Lessons-From-Paulo-Freire/124910/>





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WHEREAS, understanding education through this community engaged scholarship manifests itself in the following ways:

- 1) scholarly investigation of *real-life social problems* or *public issues*;
- 2) real-life social problems and research to address these problems that are defined *with* or *by* the community;
- 3) community-university partnerships that are *collaborative and reciprocal* and have *shared authority* in defining success;
- 4) *knowledge* to solve or improve public issues that is *collaboratively developed* by universities and communities;
- 5) the utilization of *institutional resources* and knowledge to solve these real-life social problems; and
- 6) community-engaged research or projects that are related to and forward faculty members' research and teaching.⁵

WHEREAS, prioritizing these learning outcomes is necessary for students to become active leaders capable of change instead of acquiescence in the face of structural inequality, and,

WHEREAS, the American Cultures Requirement was voted on by the student body, and established in 1989 and has required all students since 1991 to fulfill this requirement for graduation, and,

WHEREAS, the American Cultures requirement has allowed students to grapple with complex social problems relating to racial inequality and justice-oriented scholarship,⁶ through a research-led environment, and,

WHEREAS, the American Cultures Engaged Scholarship (ACES) program has provided upwards of 30 courses that "engage students in community-based learning"⁷, and,

WHEREAS, this program has been funded exclusively from private sources through a grant from the [Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. Foundation](#), without any institutional funding from the University,

⁵ Gordon da Cruz, C. (2013). Critical democratic citizenship: The effects of community-engaged scholarship and inequality content on student learning.

⁶ Gordon da Cruz, C. (2013). Critical democratic citizenship: The effects of community-engaged scholarship and inequality content on student learning.

⁷ <http://diversity.berkeley.edu/aces>





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WHEREAS, the program operated on a budget shy of 900,000 dollars over a five year period and was still able to create over 30 courses ranging across many departments and create lasting partnerships with local communities,

WHEREAS, the cost of creating additional programs is 7,000 dollars and once running these courses are often self-sufficient through the community they connect students to, and,

WHEREAS, through its tenure ACES has achieved numerous benchmarks in achieving specific learning outcomes and goals by incorporating community within education and has improved the quality of research and knowledge the students come away with after a course, and,

WHEREAS, incorporating this pedagogy in all departments provides promising avenues for more real-world research, and greater depth of learning for all students, and,

WHEREAS, the ACES program model has been adopted by other institutions of higher learning such as Stanford due to its remarkable success in achieving statistically significant increases in learning outcomes related to participatory citizenship, justice-oriented citizenship, and structural thinking about racial inequality, and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the ASUC encourages UC Berkeley to fully fund and institutionalize the ACES Program and provide for its expansion in coming years, and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that AAVP Jameson draft a letter to admin and faculty, namely the Vice Provost for Teaching, Learning, Academic Planning and Facilities, the incoming Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost and the American Cultures Academic Senate Chair, outlining the stance taken herein by students,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that EAVP Mecklai reach out to other student bodies of public institutions and start a conversation regarding how this model can become actively incorporated as a core of nationwide public education.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that President Pepito correspond with Chancellor Dirks regarding the ACES program and its future funding on Campus,

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the ASUC recognizes the ACES model as a forward-thinking and organic approach to public education that should be brought to all departments on campus.

