

1997-98 ACADEMIC SENATE REVIEW OF THE CESAR CHAVEZ CENTER FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY INSTRUCTION

STRENGTHS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The César E. Chávez Center for Interdisciplinary Instruction in Chicana and Chicano Studies (hereafter, the Center) was born in turmoil in 1993. In the short time since its inception, significant progress has been made relative to the conditions which existed in the previous Chicana/o Studies Interdepartmental Degree Program (IDP).

The Center is allocated six core faculty, and is mandated to have at least as many joint appointments. Four core faculty were hired in the '94-'95 academic year, and one each in '95-'96 and '97-'98. The strengths of these faculty are described in the self-review on pgs. 6-7. There are no two faculty members in the same field, which creates the potential for a truly interdisciplinary program (and simultaneously makes the personnel review process problematic, an issue that will be discussed later). One of the six current faculty members is on leave and is unlikely to return to UCLA. This would leave five core faculty, only one of whom is tenured. An offer is in progress for a senior faculty member to serve as Chair of the Center. He would replace Acting Chair Raymund Paredes (not a core faculty member), who due to his responsibilities as Associate Vice Chancellor cannot remain as Chair indefinitely.

There is a tremendous pool of faculty expertise in Chicana/o Studies at UCLA. This is a strength of the Center to the extent that they can capitalize on these faculty. Attention was focused on securing joint appointments in the '96-'97 academic year. There are presently at least 10 joint appointments (the number is increasing, and so is hard to pin down). These are all 0% appointments in the Center, some with and some without voting privileges. All joint appointees are expected to contribute to the teaching function of the Center. Those with voting privileges will participate in the personnel review process within the Center and will themselves be reviewed by Center faculty.

The Center presently has three full-time staff: a Management Services Officer, an Administrative Assistant, and a Student Affairs Officer. The MSO position is relatively new. The faculty and staff are now housed together in a suite of offices in Bunche Hall, which is a great improvement over the previous scattered facilities.

The curriculum has been substantially improved relative to the old IDP. The core courses 10A, 10B, and 101 have all been redesigned and will now be offered regularly. The self-review states that this year for the first time they are all being taught by core faculty. The number of courses which are affiliated with the Center (either offered by Center core faculty or cross-listed with other departments) has increased to 33 in the '96-'97 academic year.

The number of majors and specializations has also increased substantially. According to the department figures there are presently 85 majors (the Campus General Trends lists 68 for '96-'97), 15 of whom are double majors, and 83 students specializing (essentially, minoring) in Chicana/o Studies. The Center fosters student development in a variety of ways that are delineated on pgs. 7-9 of the Self Review. For example, as of the '96-'97 academic year, 27 Center students were participating in the Honors Program of the College. The review team met with roughly 25 students and found them to be articulate, deeply committed to the Center, and very demanding of the faculty.

GOALS AND PLANS

The most pressing goal is to secure a Chair for the Center. An offer is in progress and Acting Chair Paredes stated that he expects to know whether or not it will be accepted by early Winter '98. For further discussion, see Recommendation #1.

The self-review describes a large number of plans concerning the educational program, in Sections IV and VI. For instance, there are plans to add courses in field-studies and service-learning, expand the core curriculum by adding 10C, add courses in indigenous cultures, make available distance learning courses from other campuses, improve course scheduling, develop extra-curricular academic activities such as a speakers bureau, etc. These are only a few of the educational plans which are mentioned in the self-review.

While these goals are laudable, the Center should not attempt to do too much too fast, especially given that the faculty is mainly composed of Assistant Professors. It may be appropriate for the Center to develop a realistic time-line for the proposed changes, so that their success in meeting those goals can be judged fairly. In particular, the Center students are very idealistic and desirous of rapid change, and they may be more appreciative of the progress if they are involved in developing, or at least made aware of, such a time-line. The review team's opinions of which are the most important and urgent goals are given in Recommendations #3-7.

The self-review also contains a number of goals not directly related to undergraduate education. There is the important, but somewhat nebulous, goal of achieving greater stability and a common sense of purpose. Due to both the difficult history and the interdisciplinary nature of the Center, this is something which the faculty will have to continue to strive toward. On a positive note, it seemed apparent during the site visit that the junior faculty do respect each other and work well together. Another stated goal is to obtain additional extramurally funded research. The self-review also expresses the desire to establish a "clearly-defined and mutually-supportive" relationship with the Chicana/o Studies Research Center. Also, there is the intent of setting up an Advisory Board consisting of UCLA faculty and students, representatives of other Chicana/o Studies programs, and community leaders, for purposes stated on pgs. 19-20 of the self-review.

Finally, there is the stated goal of developing a graduate program and becoming a department, in a 3-5 year time frame. This last goal is addressed in Recommendation #16.

AREAS IN NEED OF ATTENTION

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Recommendation #1: It is absolutely essential that a Chair be put in place in 1998. Every effort must be made to attract Professor Macias and support him should he come. However, a back-up plan should be developed without waiting for the outcome of negotiations with Professor Macias. (To the Dean.)

The sequence of five Chairs in four years has created an untenable situation, particularly for the Junior Faculty who have lacked consistent mentorship. This recommendation is discussed at length in the external reviewers' report, pp. 2-3, and constitutes their recommendation #2.

PERSONNEL REVIEW PROCESS

Recommendation #2: Written documents should be developed for the Center as a whole and for each of the core faculty individually, addressing the academic personnel review process (particularly 4th year appraisals and tenure reviews). (To the Department and the Dean.)

The issues underlying this recommendation are discussed in the external reviewers' report, pp. 3-5 and recommendation #3. While the review process is the same for the Center faculty as for all other faculty, there are some particulars that should be spelled out, and these have to do with both process and criteria. Examples of process issues are: Since no two faculty are in the same field, how will they judge each other's work? To what extent should joint faculty from other departments play a role? Should the core faculty be strongly encouraged to have joint appointments with other departments? An example of a criterion issue is: How are the particularly heavy burdens of curricular and program development to be recognized in the appraisal and tenure review process?

The process issues have been addressed in a general way in a letter (dated April 11, 1994) from Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, Chair of the Task Force on Multidisciplinary Studies, to then Executive Vice Chancellor Andrea Rich. This letter should be distributed to the core faculty if it has not already been. We recommend that the Department, in consultation with the Dean, build on this letter to produce a document which addresses both process and criteria issues specific to the Chavez Center.

We also recommend that each member of the core faculty, in consultation with the Chair and Dean, develop a document which addresses his or her own academic personnel review process. This document would normally be drawn up well in advance of the 4th year appraisal. It would delineate whether or not he/she will hold a joint appointment in another department or division, and if so where. It would state from which departments the members of his or her ad-hoc committees could come. It could also address the faculty member's understanding of what is expected of that individual in the area of curricular and program development. For additional

suggestions, see the external reviewers' recommendation #3. This document would become a part of the file for the academic personnel review process.

The Vice Chancellor for Academic Personnel should also be consulted to ensure that these documents are not in conflict with standard procedure.

CURRICULUM AND PROGRAM COHERENCE

Recommendation #3: The Center should develop a coherent curriculum of courses which constitute the foundation for a major in Chicana/o Studies. Defining a curriculum in this way will both help in implementation of and also follow from several of the recommendations below. (To the Center faculty.)

The current major, in which 9 of the 15 courses in the major comprise an undifferentiated selection from "the approved list of Chicana and Chicano studies courses," impresses the review committee as too loose to constitute a true major. A reasonable model for the Chicana/o Studies curriculum is the document "Chicana/o Studies at UCLA: A Proposed Curriculum," which the review committee received during the site visit. The content of this document is summarized in the external reviewers' report, p. 6, recommendations #5a,b.

Recommendation #4: The Center should incorporate a field studies component in any revision of the major and should define a mechanism for assuring that students have opportunities for engaging in such field studies. (To the Center Faculty.)

Probably the most consistent plea heard from students majoring in Chicana/o Studies was the desire to participate in community action and problem solving. The current major has a one term field studies requirement (1997-99 catalog, p. 178), but mechanisms for implementing this requirement seemed vague to the review committee. There are a number of units on campus which are well-placed to provide students with community opportunities, and the Asian American Studies Center seems to have a model program of this type for its students (see external reviewers' report, p. 6, recommendation #5d for specific programs). The Center should explore these existing resources. Financial support may be available to compile a listing of existing field studies opportunities, from either the Office of Instructional Development or the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education. The Field Studies Development Director within OID may also be helpful.

Recommendation #5: The members of the core faculty in the Center should move as soon as possible to full teaching loads of Chicana/o Studies courses. (To the Center Faculty and the Chair.)

For justifiable reasons, core faculty members of the Center have had reduced teaching loads. The result has been that the majority of courses which students have taken to fulfill major requirements have been taught by faculty from outside the Center. It is the core faculty who will ultimately determine the form of the Chicana/o Studies major, and students clearly view the core

faculty members as “their” faculty, distinct from faculty members from outside the Center. It is therefore in the best interests of both core faculty and students that the core faculty play a preeminent role in designing and teaching courses for the major. A propos, the external reviewers have recommended that the Center add a course 10C to the 10A-B introductory lower division sequence (external reviewers’ report, p. 6, recommendation #5c). While in principle the addition of such a course is worthwhile (and was planned by the Center faculty), the internal reviewers question the wisdom of adding yet another lower division course which will require core faculty resources. The principal charge of the core faculty is to serve the major, which consists of upper division courses.

Recommendation #6: Seek funding and establish a Community Scholars Program, which would bring people from the community, such as labor or political leaders, as guest speakers for classes, speakers series, etc. (To the Dean and the Chair.)

This is recommendation #5e of the external reviewers (p. 6), which the internal reviewers support. A number of students expressed a desire for such a program.

Recommendation #7: Convert the specialization in Chicana/o Studies to a minor. (To the Center faculty.)

This is recommendation #5g of the external reviewers (p. 7), which the internal reviewers support. This should require little more than a brief memo from the Center to the L & S Faculty Executive Committee in preparation for approval by the Undergraduate Council.

JOINT FACULTY

Recommendation #8: Efforts should be made to integrate the joint faculty into the Center to a much greater degree than at present. (To the Dean, Chair, and Center faculty.)

There are at least ten faculty who have accepted joint appointments. However, their average level of involvement is presently too low. There should be an effort made to: actively recruit more joint faculty; articulate what is expected of joint faculty; encourage and give incentives for joint faculty to be actively involved in the development of the educational program, mentoring of junior faculty, and the personnel review process. This is further discussed in the external reviewers’ report on p. 5, recommendation #4.

MISSION STATEMENT

Recommendation #9: The Center should craft a statement that includes “a clear articulation that defines Chicana and Chicano Studies as understood by the Chavez Center.” (external reviewers’ report, p. 2, recommendation #1) (To the Center faculty.)

This recommendation is the same as recommendation #1 of the external reviewers. The internal reviewers consider this recommendation to be less crucial than some others. The process of the Center faculty articulating a shared vision is essential, but not so the document itself. In fact, if

recommendations on developing curriculum coherence are implemented, the mission of the Center should be implicit in that curriculum.

STUDENT-RELATED ISSUES

Recommendation #10: The Center should develop a structure for student advising which formalizes faculty involvement. (To the Center faculty and the Chair.)

This recommendation echoes the sense of a recommendation found on page 8 of the external reviewers' report, though they do not list it as a separate numbered recommendation. A number of students strongly praised the help they received from the Center student affairs officer, but faculty members were less sanguine about the quality of her advice. Students do come to core faculty members for advising, but there is no formal structure to assure this. Such formalization would not preclude students consulting with the students affairs officer, nor should it, but it would assure faculty input and control.

Recommendation #11: If space resources exist, students in the Center should have a gathering space to foster a sense of community and raise the visibility of the Chicana/o Studies major. (To the Dean.)

This is essentially the same as the external reviewers' recommendation #8, p. 8. Given the constraints on campus space and the fact that few if any programs have space specifically designated for casual undergraduate gatherings, the internal reviewers question the likelihood that this recommendation could realistically be implemented.

Recommendation #12: Student input should be included in decision making in the Center in accordance with existing by-laws. (To the Center faculty and the Chair.)

This is the same as the external reviewers' recommendation #9, p. 8.

STAFF RELATIONS

Recommendation #13: "We recommend that the current chair work immediately with the appropriate university personnel office to examine and resolve relations between staff and faculty." (external reviewers' report, recommendation #10, p. 9) (To the Chair.)

The internal reviewers fully concur with recommendation #10 of the external reviewers. Administrators, faculty, staff, and students have quite different perspectives on their interrelations and the etiology of conflicts which have developed. It was impossible for the review committee, during the short period of the site visit and from existing documentation, to understand fully the dynamics of these relations. The external reviewers recommend the intervention of a "trained facilitator", a recommendation which should be implemented as soon as possible.

CENTER GOVERNANCE

Recommendation #14: The Implementation Committee should be disbanded. (To the Chancellor.)

This is contained within the external reviewers' recommendation #4, p. 5, with which the internal reviewers completely concur. Also, the Multidisciplinary Studies Task Force Report addresses this issue in Recommendation #19 on pg. 15. It is stated, "Presumably the transfer of authority will occur when the Chancellor determines that there exists a critical mass of faculty who hold permanent appointments in the Center, both those who hold 100% appointments in the Center and those with joint appointments." Since the Center presently has its full complement of core faculty, and has met the requirement that joint appointments constitute the majority of faculty, it appears that the time has come for the transfer of authority.

Recommendation #15: The Center's by-laws should be revised as needed and then followed. (To the Center faculty and Chair.)

This is the same as the external reviewers' recommendation #6, p. 7.

DEPARTMENTAL STATUS AND GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS

Recommendation #16: Since the Center has stated the eventual goal of instituting a graduate program and becoming a department, they should be supplied with the appropriate documents detailing the relevant criteria and procedures. (To the FEC and Academic Senate.)

This is the same as the external reviewers' recommendation #7, pp. 7-8. An additional point is to determine what the role of joint faculty should be if the Center becomes a department, since at that time there would presumably be no mandate concerning joint appointments.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite the Chávez Center's origin in conflict and its turbulent history to date, especially in finding and retaining a Chair who was able to exercise consistent leadership, the faculty and students of the Center impressed the review committee with their optimism and resilience. Los Angeles has been and will continue to be the nation's preeminent locus of Chicana/o life, and UCLA is the natural institution to lead the study of that life. With proper leadership, there is no reason why it cannot be.

Respectfully submitted:

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Russell Schuh, Linguistics, Undergraduate Council

Revised February 18, 1998



MEMORANDUM

Office of Dean Scott Waugh
Division of Social Sciences
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March 25, 1998

Academic Senate Executive Office
Los Angeles Division

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the review of the Cesar Chavez Center for Interdisciplinary Instruction in Chicano and Chicana Studies. I think that the report does an admirable job of identifying and commenting on the strengths and weakness of the program and makes sensible suggestions for improvement. It is important to underscore a point made at the outset of the report: the Center represents a unique experiment in interdisciplinary organization at UCLA, one that originated in the most difficult circumstances imaginable. Given the extraordinary nature of the Center, the progress it has made in the last few years is laudable.

I fully agree that the most important step now is to appoint a Chair. It is hoped that the appointment of Professor Macias will overcome this salient deficiency, and we are working hard to achieve both goals.

I also support the recommendation that the personnel review process for each faculty member should be specified and committed to writing so that all parties to the process are aware of the specifications. At the same time, I would hope that the faculty will develop internal policies or practices which will help them create a cohesive interdisciplinary unit. It is important that they develop means of appreciating and evaluating one another's scholarship, a critical element in creating an academic community.

Other recommendations also have merit. A Community Scholars Program is desirable and should be explored when a new chair is in place. Space for students is much more problematic given the present overcrowding in Bunche Hall. The goal is worthwhile, but not attainable at present.

I hope that these comments are useful in your process. If you need any clarification or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott L. Waugh'.

Scott L. Waugh, Ph.D.
Dean of Social Sciences
College of Letters and Science

SLW/sr

**1997-98 ACADEMIC SENATE REVIEW OF THE
CESAR E. CHAVEZ CENTER FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES**

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Approved by the Undergraduate Council: January 30, 1998

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