

To: Su Swarat, Senior Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Planning, Accreditation Liaison Officer

From: Jessica Stern, Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences and Carl Wendt, Associate Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Subject: Dean's Summary and Evaluation of the Ethnic Studies Option in Asian-American Studies (B.A.)

The Asian American Studies (ASAM) department offers a BA degree in Ethnic Studies with a Concentration in Asian American Studies, and an undergraduate Asian American Studies minor. From 2016 to 2023, the department has awarded 14 BA degrees and 74 minors. From fall 2011 to fall 2022, ten first time, first year students and four undergraduate transfer students enrolled at the university as ASAM majors. Most BA students added ASAM as a second major, but since the university does not track when students change majors or add additional majors it is difficult to determine exactly how many (and when) students added ASAM as their major. However, from 2012 to 2023 the university awarded 39 BAs in ASAM, indicating that roughly 25 students added ASAM as a major (64% of ASAM graduates) after they enrolled at the university. Time to degree for ASAM majors (both FTF and UDT) is consistent with university averages of 4-6 years, but since data on when students changed majors or add ASAM as a second major are lacking, it is difficult to determine time to degree for these students.

ASAM has 8 tenured, tenure-track faculty, and 20 lecturers. Faculty in the department engage in strong empirically based research, outstanding student-centered teaching, and creative collaborations with the local Asian American communities. Since its last PPR in 2011, ASAM became a department (fall 2018), and in 2021 the department hired three new assistant professors. In fall 2021, Asian American Studies, along with AFAM and CHIC, began implementing AB 1460, the statewide ethnic studies' general education requirement (GE Area F). Asian American Studies has gone through significant growth and changes in a very short period. From fall 2012 to fall 2022, FTES in ASAM have increased 614%. These changes have significantly increased faculty workload especially in service. In fall 2024, 1280 (256 FTES) of 3451 (690.2 FTES) Area F seats (37%) were filled in ASAM Area F courses.

The Asian American Studies was reviewed on February 16, 2024 by two external reviewers (Dr. Yén Lê Espiritu, Distinguished Professor of Ethnic Studies, University of California, San Diego and Dr. Donna J. Nicol, Professor and Chair of Africana Studies Department, California State University Dominguez Hills) and one internal reviewer (Dr. Eugene M. Fujimoto, Associate Professor of Educational Leadership Development). On April 16, 2024, Dean

Jessica Stern, Associate Dean Carl Wendt, and Chair Eric Reyes met on to discuss ASAM's Self Study, the External Review Team (ERT) report, and the Department's response to that report. In the remainder of this memo, we record and build on that discussion.

### **Opportunities for Development**

#### **Growth:**

As of January 2024, ASAM had 15 majors and 35 minors. Minors have increased sharply since 2011 (700%), whereas the number of ASAM major has remained low. The increase in the number of ASAM minors is likely due in part to the inception of the Area F requirement. From AY 2018-2019 to AY 2022-2023 the number of ASAM minors have increased by 23%.

The number of ASAM majors has been low for years. Between AY 2011-2012 and AY 2022-2023, the number of majors varied from 7 to 11, and in that same time period, degrees conferred fluctuated from 1 to 9. The department is eager to grow both its majors and minors (minors have been on the rise since the inception of GE Area F; see above). The department and faculty plan to reach out to high schools and community colleges with the goal of growing majors. ASAM also recognizes that while growing the major is important, additional metrics should be included to evaluate the department's worth. Some of these are articulated in the chair's response to the external review report and include the "size of GE 'footprint' (FTES), level and intensities of high-impact practices in our pedagogy, culturally taxation work such as mentoring, advising on graduate school, community, and civic engagement at multiple levels: intra-campus partnerships such as with APARC and AAPIFSA, inter-campus/intra-system work – CSU Ethnic Studies liaison work, and external partnerships with numerous community-based organizations."

The department is committed to develop and grow their curriculum not only to support and attract majors and minors, but also to continue and deepen the impact of ASAM learning experiences for CSUF students, regardless of their major/minor. The Dean's Office supports this commitment to expanding their curriculum beyond that of the Area F requirement, which will certainly contribute to increasing the number of majors, minors, and the number of degrees conferred.

#### **Staffing:**

With the addition of GE Area F, the workload of the chair and other faculty has increased sharply. The external review team recommends that the department create a vice chair position that will ease some of the chair's workload and also act to ease the transition by training and preparing a new chair once the current chair's term is up. The department would like to increase the number of faculty to 12-15 (currently eight) in the next three to seven years and staff to help implement the Area F requirement. New faculty lines, planned in the areas of transnationalism or global/local politics, Pacific Islander Studies, and Southeast Asian Studies, will also help strengthen the department's breadth and aid in faculty development. Hiring soon is important because three of the current faculty are close to retirement. The College will help the department determine how many lines the Area F funding will support.

#### Recognition of service in RTP:

The value of ASAM and other ethnic studies departments is much more than the number of majors and graduates per year. By taking ASAM and other ethnic studies courses, students become "more academically, civically, and politically engaged, social justice-minded, and community-oriented" (External Revisers' Report, p. 5). The Dean's Office applauds the department for revising their Departmental Personnel Standards in a way that captures the contributions of ASAM faculty, including student mentorship and community work and engagement. The Dean's Office does not want ASAM to simply become a service department for the new Area F requirement.

#### Teaching:

The department should maintain a balance in TT teaching by rotating teaching schedules to include a balance of lower- and upper-division courses, and GE and non-GE courses.

#### Student Success:

The new tandem advisor model has been a success in the department, and while that should continue, ASAM recognizes the importance of faculty advising for the major. TT faculty play an important role in student advising and mentoring, such as working closely with students on conference presentations and publications. Tandem advisors' role is most important in general curriculum advising but is not a substitute for other advising.

#### Space and Facilities:

With the new Area F requirement, ASAM and the other ethnic studies departments have grown exponentially nearly overnight. Office space for lecturer faculty and staff is seriously insufficient. The department lacks a central location for community building, such as a student gathering space. There is also a lack of private office space for student advising. One temporary solution is for ASAM faculty (and staff) to occupy office spaces on the eighth floor of the Humanities building, which will be available once the History Department vacates. The estimated time for History to vacate the eighth floor is Spring or Summer 2024. Ideally, all faculty office space would be located on the same floor or in close proximity.

#### Area F Funds:

Every year, the three ethnic studies departments receive \$905k in baseline funding from the state "to provide an ethnic studies course to all students" and is "comprised of instructional, administrative, and one-time Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) review activities" (2021-22 Final Budget Allocation. July 13, 2021. Coded Memo B 2021-02, Attachments, p. 19). The Dean's Office encourages ASAM and the other ethnic studies departments to organize a working group to develop a plan for what these funds will be used for. Possibilities include hiring additional staff and faculty to support the department's Area F growth.