

In the 1970's, UCLA was at the forefront of Ethnic Studies programs in the nation. Over the last year, there has been no hesitation to remind the campus community of this wonderful feat. In an October address to the campus community, Chancellor Block wrote "UCLA's Ethnic Studies Programs furthers our mission as a public university"; however, in this time of financial constraint, we have witnessed that the first and most significant budget cuts were made to programs, departments and centers that concentrate on increasing the level of understanding and knowledge of the many UCLA cultural environments.

The recent elimination of the Student Affairs Officer's position for the American Indian Studies Program (AISP) and the termination of Dwight Youpee are indicators of the deprioritization of ethnic studies at UCLA. Given that we are immediately following the year dedicated as "the year of Ethnic Studies" by UCLA's Chancellor Block, it is sharply contradictory that we are witnessing such drastic cuts to an area that is absolutely essential to the success of students within the AISP. Budget cuts of this nature disenable the American Indian Studies Program from functioning to the capacity in which the students and the campus community demand and deserve.

The American Indian Studies Program has played a vital role in the UCLA campus community. USAC regards the elimination of the program's Student Affairs Officer as an attack on campus diversity and a silencing of the unique experiences of the American Indian Community. In the wake of the recent national attacks on diversity in education with measures such as Arizona's HB 2281, Bruins expect all entities of UCLA to fight diligently to promote diversity on campus, Though we acknowledge over the last year there have been budget cuts to almost every program and department on campus, the elimination of the AISP SAO is unproportionate, excessive, and simply unacceptable.

The Undergraduate Student Association Council stands in solidarity with the students of the American Indian Studies Interdepartmental Program and recognizes their need for a designated Student Affairs representative.

On behalf of the student body, USAC not only requests that the Student Affairs Officer position be restored, but also that the American Indian Studies Program is departmentalized and a Native Recruiter position is established. Students want action behind the words Chancellor Block wrote in his October address on ethnic studies. Block rightfully labeled the 40th year legacy of Ethnic Studies at UCLA "a unique point of pride for our campus community." In its upcoming 41st year of existence, students demand that the University make a commitment to Ethnic Studies Programs and Departments as they strive to service our campus community and the broader Los Angeles area by making the University what it should be.

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