

2000 National; MEChA Advocacy Agenda

Chicano/a Studies

Presented to:

2000 MEChA National Conference
El Paso Community College
April 20-23, 2000

Proposed by:

MEChA de UC Irvine
Officially Recognized Chapter of
Orange County MEChA Central
Alta Califas Sur Regional

MEChA de UC Irvine would like to present this advocacy agenda item on Chicana/o Studies before the MEChA National resolution circle. This advocacy agenda item was first presented at

the Alta Califas Sur MEChA Regional and was passed by unanimous consensus. It was then introduced and discussed at the National MEChA Advocacy Agenda meeting on April 22, 2000. The campuses present at the meeting made changes and recommendation. UC Berkeley motioned to forward this advocacy agenda item with all the changes and recommendations made. This motion was passed by unanimous consensus.

Chapters Present at the NMAA Meeting:

Voting

Arizona State University
Brown University
California State University, Bakersfield
California State University, Northridge
Central Washington University
Eastern Washington University
Hartnell Community College
King City High School
Mesa Community College
Ohlone College
Pasadena City College
Phoenix College
Pomona High School
Sacramento State University
San Antonio College
San Diego State University
San Francisco State University
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Davis
University of California, Irvine
University of California, Los Angeles
University of California, Riverside
University of Houston
University of Texas, Austin
University of Texas, San Antonio
Yucama Valley College

Non-voting

PART I - DESCRIPTION OF ISSUES

It has been over thirty years since the adoption of **El Plan de Santa Barbara** and now into the new millennium and the fight for Chicano/a Studies wages on. We have seen the implementation, shrinkage, and ultimate destruction of entire Chicano/a Studies programs and departments on campuses across the country. Where such programs and departments do exist, they are plagued with problems, contradictions and inconsistencies.

El Plan gave us a blueprint for institutionalizing Chicano/a Studies in our Schools, the question remains, however, have we accomplished what it is set out to do? El Plan presents a clear vision of what Chicano/a Studies represent and how it should be implemented:

"The institutionalization of Chicano programs is the realization of Chicano power on campus. The key to his power is found in the application of the principles of self-determination and self-liberation. These principles are defined and practiced in areas of control, autonomy, flexibility, and participation. Often, imaginary or symbolic authority is confused with the real. Many time's token efforts in program constructive programming. It is the responsibility of Chicanos on campus to insure dominant influence of these programs. The point is not to have a college with a program, but rather a Chicano program at the college." (EPDSB)

"If Chicanos do not exert dominant influence over the program, better no program at all." (EPDSB)

It is detrimental to **El Movimiento** to have a new generation of Raza youth without an identity, a history, a culture or a desire for self-determination and empowerment, which is stipulated in EI Plan as the ultimate goal your Chicano/a forefathers and foremothers. Moreover, what does this say to us about our place and role in EI Movimiento? In actuality, how far have we really come?

How are we expected to learn, understand, accept, and embrace issues such as **OUR** history, **OUR** struggle, **OUR** contributions, **OUR** culture, and **OUR** triumphs, as well as **OUR** losses and **OUR** pains? This can only be accomplished through the improvement and creation of Chic anal Chicano Studies programs/departments in which we have control. Chicana/o Studies programs/departments will provide a safe space for the creation of new knowledge about the diverse Chicana/o community. Chicana/o Studies will advocate, support, and promote social change, critical awareness, and critical consciousness. Thus, Chicano/a Studies is the key to empowerment and self-determination, for us as individuals, as well as the community as whole.

What was set out to be accomplished over 30 years ago still goes unfulfilled. Now is the time to take it upon ourselves to recommit to the active implementing, maintaining, and developing of Chicano/a studies at a national level. Complacency and stagnation lurk at every comer, we must remember our place in **EI Movimiento**. By definition, if we are to succeed, then we must take **immediate** action.

PART II – GOALS

Short Term

1. Revisit and introduce **El Plan de Santa Barbara** into MEChA at your respective campus and surrounding community.
2. Revisit and reintroduce **El Plan de Santa Barbara** into already existing and upcoming Chicano/a Studies programs or departments.
3. Further discuss Chicano/a Studies at MEChA meetings and conferences and community events.
4. Establishment of a Chicano/a Studies Committee on campus to undertake the responsibilities of researching and maintaining communication with other Chicano/a Studies Programs at other schools.

Intermediate

1. Implement Chicano/a Studies course/s that deal with both the historical and contemporary social, cultural, political, and spiritual issues of Chicanos/as, i.e. mujeres in leadership, gender roles, sexuality. identity, LGBT community, indigenismo, contributions of Chicanas/os of non-Mexican descent, etc.
2. Increase MEChA involvement in the National Association for Chicano & Chicana Studies (NACCS).

Long Term

1. Implement a Chicano/a Studies Program.
2. Establish a voting MEChA representative within the decision-making committee.
3. Implement a Chicano/a Studies Department.
4. Establish a Junta Estudiantil for the Chicana/o Studies program/department, that will be officially recognized by your respective college/university which will increase the participation and input of all students majoring/minoring in Chicana/o Studies.
5. Implement a Chicana/o Studies program/department that encompasses, but is not limited to, a curriculum that focuses on for main components: community oriented, development of critical analysis, reflexive, and holistic.

PART III – TACTICS

There is no pre-established, universal set of tactics that function equally effective in all cases or in all schools. Tactics vary according to what is trying to be accomplished and the stage in the struggle for Chicano/a Studies you are in. The tactics utilized should be more a question of need and feasibility; with each chapter using its past experience to determine what tactic works best in certain situations, and whether or not it can use such a tactic effectively. During the implementation for Chicano/a Studies, the tactics are in the form being prepared, good planning, and foresight.

1. Determine the need for a Chicano/a Studies at your school. Build upon what you already have. If you don't have a program then by implementing a course or two. If your school already has Chicano/a Studies course/s, then it is time to expand and combine those courses, along with others, into program. The ultimate goal of organizing for Chicano/a Studies is the implementation of a full department. This can be accomplished by thoroughly evaluating and assessing the current situation with Chicano/a in your school and by following EI Plan de Santa Barbara
2. Simultaneously, an assessment must be done of the schools' policies and regulations guiding the implementation of new courses, programs and departments.
3. Determine who you allies are. These people will be very important when decision-making is taking place.
4. Gather support and consensus from other students, faculty, administration, staff and community members to assess the current state of Chicana/o Studies and determine it's direction.
5. Collect information from existing schools similar to yours. courses, programs, and departments at other
6. Approach administration with your concerns in regards to the current state Chicano/a Studies at your school, only after thoroughly assessed the situation.
7. Request that a Chicano/a Studies Committee is formed within the program/department. This committee should be composed of faculty, staff students, Mechistas, and Junta Estudiantil representatives. Student representatives should have a formal vote in this committee.

PART IV

If your Chicano/a Studies Department is already established:

1. Make sure students get involved in the search committee that does the hiring of new faculty.
2. Propose that the departments have a person whose specific job is write grants to bring more money into the program/department.
3. Work towards a gender balance within faculty members.
4. Work in collaboration with Chicano/a Studies Department to bring in educational speakers including, but not limited to, community activist to discuss issues/topics that students are interested in.
5. Have a day retreat at the beginning of the year to set goals and objectives for the academic year and for the future of the department.
6. Form a better sense of community within the department.
7. Create a governance document, if one doesn't already exists, that explains the responsibilities of the director, faculty, staff and Junat Estudiantil Representatives, and other students. This document can serve as a way to hold people accountable to their responsibilities.
8. Work toward the further development of Chicana/o Studies Department. At the community College level, establish an A.A. Program. At the university level establish a B.A. Program and eventually work toward establishing a Master, and Ph.D. Program.

PART V – TARGETS

The primary target of an active campaign for Chicano/a Studies are all schools across the country that have MEChA Chapters willing to do the work.

1. High Schools
2. Community Colleges
3. Public Universities
4. Private Universities