

Date: April 4, 2016

To: Campus Community

From: Karen S. Haynes, Ph.D.
President

Subject: Continuing Our Work in Diversity and Inclusion

Over the past few weeks I have listened to a variety of voices from every segment of our campus and I have heard their concerns regarding issues of diversity and inclusion. While individual voices touched upon a variety of issues that need to be carefully considered, they collectively shared a passion to move our campus forward in this area and an understanding of the committed effort it takes to accomplish this work.

I share this passion for, and commitment to, the work of enhancing the diversity and inclusivity of our campus and firmly believe that these shared values provide CSUSM with a strong foundation upon which to build as we move forward together. As a step on that path, last Monday I met with a group of student leaders from Associated Students, Inc. and other student organizations to discuss how we can work together to make Cal State San Marcos a more welcoming and inclusive campus.

As I listened to the concerns and desires expressed by these student leaders and others over the past weeks, some themes have emerged. These include:

- Ensuring that the student voice is heard beyond one voice or one administrator; that students are at the table in important discussions.
- Concern that advocacy will be silenced.
- Lack of diversity, inclusion and social justice in the curriculum and co-curriculum.
- Concern that faculty and staff know how to support students who confide in them – either it be on issues of diversity or sexual violence.
- Improved training and professional development opportunities for faculty, staff and administrators to be more culturally proficient and able to facilitate difficult dialogues.
- Diversity in the faculty, particularly tenure track faculty.

At my meeting with student leaders I also shared some actions that we've already taken and will be taking relative to their concerns. A few of those actions in key areas are included below:

Supporting Student Centers

- Funding has been set aside for a new Black Student Center, and plans for its establishment are moving forward. I am awaiting a report with recommendations regarding resourcing and structure for the center from a task force which was seated in December with strong student representation. This report is due to me in May.
- In addition to looking at the optimal resourcing and structure of the Office of Diversity, Educational Equity, Inclusion and Ombuds (DEEIO), we're also looking at how to leverage the partnerships with the various centers in ASI, the Cross-Cultural Center, the Latin@ Center, as well as the anticipated Black Student Center.

Diversity of Campus Population

- Increasing the enrollment and retention of indigenous and black students is also in the Diversity and Inclusion strategic plan. Recently we disaggregated our students who fall into the multi-race category to get a better understanding of who these students are. Overall, 582 students indicate they have American Indian heritage, or about 4.8 percent of our student population. We are the only CSU with a Tribal Liaison. Our African American student retention rate is higher than any other student group, and we are exploring ways to ensure this also translates to better graduation rates and closing the achievement gap.
- A plan to increase diversity of tenured professors of color is in the draft strategic plan but efforts to achieve this goal have already been taking place. We've increased tenured faculty of color by 16 percent since we implemented required search committee training three years ago.
- Having started in spring 2015, we will continue to do the Diverse Learning Environment Survey every other year. An infographic highlighting the 2015 results has been posted on the CSUSM IP&A website (www.csusm.edu/ipa) and we're sharing the results with several groups on campus, including the Graduation Initiative Steering Committee, Assessment Council, Student Life and Leadership and the Diversity Advisory Council to inform their work.

Educating the Campus Community

- Training for staff, faculty and administrators is included in the draft Diversity strategic plan. While it cannot be mandated for faculty and staff, I intend to make it mandatory for administrators and strongly encourage it for faculty

and staff.

- There are recommendations from the faculty representatives on the Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan task force to implement a course requirement for diversity and inclusion within the curriculum.
- The Chicana program proposal has been submitted to the Chancellor's Office and we're awaiting review and approval. However, the Chancellor commissioned a system-wide report on Ethnic studies about a year ago and at that time he also put a moratorium on the establishment of any new programs. We're awaiting that report that will outline how the CSU can best deliver and support these programs.

Supporting Gender Equity

- We are investing in resources and services that are survivor supportive and ensuring that our work on education and intervention efforts regarding sexual violence are trauma informed. We also increased resources to ensure education for staff and students. Our efforts to address these issues are not only consistent with federal guidance and CSU policy, but I believe we are going above and beyond what is required because it is the right thing to do. We invested significant resources, off the top of our budget, to these efforts because I share your belief that it is important that we do so.
- Several years ago we began creating gender inclusive bathrooms in those self-funded facilities that we have local control over. As a result, there are gender inclusive restrooms in the University Student Union, the Student Health Center and the Sports Center. We've also transitioned restrooms in state supported buildings to the extent we've been able to due to building codes and funding sources. We continue to seek opportunities to increase the availability of gender inclusive bathrooms in campus facilities.

I appreciate the time students took to engage in this important dialogue. I have committed to working with Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. Lorena Meza, and ASI to identify additional opportunities for student voices to be heard so that we can have shared understanding and work together to identify solutions that best serve our students and the campus community.