



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, DOMINGUEZ HILLS

Academic Senate • 1000 E. Victoria • Carson, CA 90747 • WH-A420 • (310) 243-3312

**\*W Sense of the Senate**

**EXEC 19-05**

**Resolution in Rejection of the “GENERAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE REPORT:  
Recommendations for GE Review and Reform” (2019)**

**Passed Unanimously March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of California State University Dominguez Hills (ASCSUDH) reject the *General Education Task Force (GETF) Report: Recommendations for GE Review and Reform* (2019); and be it further,

RESOLVED: That the ASCSUDH instruct the ASCSU to reject the GETF report *in total* as a flawed document for the reasons detailed in the rationale; and be it further,

RESOLVED: That the ASCSUDH calls for a moratorium on further changes to General Education and graduation requirements in the CSU in light of the curricula erosion produced by revised EO 1100R and EO 1110.

RESOLVED: That this resolution be distributed to the:

- ASCSU,
- 23 CSU Senates,
- Chancellor,
- Governor,
- President,
- Provost,
- Deans,
- CSUDH faculty and staff
- Associated Students, Inc.,

***RATIONALE:***

The ASCSUDH bases the resolution on the following considerations:

- Though the Task Force was convened by the ASCSU in March 2017, the deliberative process that generated its final report was marred by a lack of transparency. The GETF conducted its discussions and proceedings behind closed doors. To date, meeting agendas, minutes, and other correspondence among task force members are unavailable, despite a public records request demanding their release.<sup>1</sup>
- The GETF did not pursue any meaningful effort to consult with CSU faculty or students, especially CSU senates, G.E. committees, and American Institutions specialists. The GETF issued only two updates on its proceedings in nearly two years of operation, leaving most CSU

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<sup>1</sup> A Public Records Act Request for access to all records pertinent to the deliberations of the General Education Task Force was submitted on January 14, 2019. On February 8, the Chancellor’s Office responded by sending a list of six links to documents available on the CSU webpage, none of which work. The CO’s response claimed that for a variety of reasons it would be unable to produce additional documentation earlier than June 2019.

faculty unaware of the nature of its discussions and unclear on its timeline for completing its responsibilities.

- The GETF did not complete its planned consultation due to outside pressures as indicated in ASCSUDH communication with GETF co-chair Miller in April 2018 and again in February 2019, when Miller indicated why the plan for broad consultation was never realized “As you know, though, circumstances beyond our control intervened (e.g., among other factors, campus responses to EO 1100R slowed our work), and it became clear that we didn’t have the capacity to enact the communication plan.”
- The report states that the CSU General Education Program is “outdated”, having not been updated in over 50 years. While technically true – the overall **structure** of the General Education Program had not changed in fifty years prior to the imposition of EO 1100 – this claim is profoundly misleading. Both the **structure and content** of campus programs have evolved consistently and continue to evolve to the present moment. In fact, the past ten years have been marked by continuous and deliberate reflection, assessment, and redesign of GE programs across the 23 CSUs.
- Despite the GETF’s stated commitment to make its work “data driven wherever possible rather than assumption based,”<sup>2</sup> its report and recommendations provided no evidence that current General Education Programs do not already achieve their objectives, ignoring available data, assessments, and IRB-approved student surveys and questionnaires about key GE courses.
- The GETF recommended changes do not provide evidence to show that implementation of its recommendations will improve student success across the 23 campuses.
- General Education contributes to students’ intellectual growth, prepares them to succeed in their major degree programs, develops transferrable skills that contribute to career flexibility, and empowers them to discharge competently their civic obligations locally and at the state and national and international levels; the proposed GE program ascribes a drastically reduced role to disciplinary methods and knowledge in the arts, humanities, social sciences, physical sciences, the life sciences, and other areas essential for a well-rounded education.
  - The GE Committee rejects the reduction of GE breadth (e.g., fewer Social Science and Humanities courses, the proposed collapsing of AI into a single course, etc.).
  - The GE Committee affirms that more coherence in GE is a positive; however, that end can be achieved in many ways, not only with this (highly disruptive) model.
  - While some programs support the reduction of GE units in order to add more classes to their major, the GE Committee argues this would undercut the gains to be made by a broad liberal arts education necessary for equity in higher education and to differentiate our alumni from students who attend trade school.
- The GETF proposes radical changes to the structure and content of CSU General Education programs. Such changes would be counterproductive to the stated aim of facilitating the attainment of the stated goals of GI 2025, result in significant bottlenecks that impede student progress, by necessitating years of additional curricular modifications and by increasing curricular complexity.
  - Its proposals follow quickly on the heels of the revised EO 1100, a change to General Education which itself generated time-consuming curricular modifications that remain difficult to implement even today.
- The assertion that the General Education Curriculum, rather than structural inequities in contemporary American society, creates equity gaps, is unsupported. The ASCSUDH asserts

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<sup>2</sup> General Education Task Force (GETF), “Initial Update from the ASCSU General Education Task Force—March 2018” (March 2018), 4.

GE provides students with the intellectual armor they need to counter the anti-intellectualism, hyper-ethnocentrism, racism and sexism that facilitate the persistence of structural inequalities.

- The GETF’s recommendations directly conflict with the recommendations of the Chancellor’s Ethnic Studies Task Force, which Chancellor White explicitly endorsed.<sup>3</sup>
- The GETF’s recommendations would disproportionately reduce enrollments in smaller academic programs, many of which provide the core of student’s experiences in ethnic and gender studies, all of which make important contributions to General Education and our academic community more generally.
- The recommendation that existing American Institutions courses be replaced by one poorly defined three-unit course in American “Democracy” – undefined by the GETF and said course *may* include American and California government and History (p. 7), is indefensible at a time of national crisis when the need for an informed and engaged citizenry is as evident as ever. The claim that Title V (as reflected in EO 1061) does not require two-three unit courses is another “bad faith” argument that cannot stand scrutiny. Further the Council of Historians for American Institutions condemns the recommendations as does the American Historical Association.<sup>4</sup>
- While we believe there should be limits to double-counting, the proposal to eliminate the double counting of GE courses advanced by the Task Force are problematic because:
  - It is contrary to revised EO 1100, and it contradicts one of the stated goals of the Task Force to reduce the number of units students complete in GE.
  - It will add an additional threat to enrollment in small departments,
  - It eliminates existing informal GE “pathways.”
  - It will hinder the implementation of Integrated Teacher Preparation Programs designed to ease teacher shortages within the communities we serve and undermine the Chancellor’s Office previous investments.
  - It will hinder the implementation of subject matter preparation programs in both single and multiple subject areas—further impacting existing teacher shortages.
  - It will negatively impact the accreditation process for Communication Studies.
  - It will impede majors with high units.

The proposed changes will significantly impact community college transfer agreements. In particular, as GE shrinks and majors grow, more and more of the courses in the major will be completed prior to students transferring to the University. Many programs in Arts and Humanities are already concerned about this and have difficulty not “reteaching” what was taught at the community college level. It would create major disruptions in community college districts throughout the state and create an enormous amount of work to revise all of our existing agreements and advising materials.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.calstate.edu/AcadAff/ethnicstudiesreport.pdf>. “Report of the California State University Task Force on the Advancement of Ethnic Studies,” (January 2016), 2.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.historians.org/news-and-advocacy/aha-urges-historians-and-californians-to-take-action>