

In its meeting of May 20, 2011, the Puerto Rican, Latino, and Latin American Studies (PRLAS) Discipline Council, composed of the heads of Puerto Rican/Latino/Latin American studies academic units within CUNY, adopted the following motion:

- I. To support the resolution passed overwhelmingly by the University Faculty Senate on March 15, 2011 on the proposed CUNY General Education framework. The PRLAS Discipline Council agrees that transferability issues should be separated from General Education reform and that the faculty at each College must retain authority over curriculum matters. Furthermore, the CUNY administration should recognize the distinct academic mission and personality of each College within the University. The proposed CUNY General Education framework violates those principles.

- II. The PRLAS Discipline Council is especially concerned with the insistence of the CUNY administration on implementing a 42-credit limit on the General Education requirements. The Council believes that such a severe limitation on the size of the Gen Ed will create pressures at each College for the elimination from the core requirements of those courses whose learning goals center on preparing our students to live as citizens in an increasingly diverse city and nation. The City University of New York was a pioneer among U.S. universities in the development of curricula designed to serve an ever-changing diverse urban population heavily composed of minorities which historically were rarely able to enroll in courses that taught them about their historical and cultural traditions and how these changed through time. This is not the time to abandon that critical commitment.

The results of the 2010 U.S. Census show that nearly one-third of the population of the City is now comprised of a Latino/a population that is increasingly becoming more diverse. The Census Bureau projects that Latinos will comprise one in three 'Americans' by 2050. The City already 'looks' demographically like the entire nation will by the mid-21st century.

The CUNY student body is a reflection of these demographic changes and on many campuses Latinos of diverse national origins comprise the largest race/ethnic concentration of students. The courses taught by the departments and programs represented by the PRLAS Disciplinary Council are critical in serving the educational needs and intellectual interests of these students. Additionally, they offer the opportunity to non-Latino students to study and understand the backgrounds and cultures of a sector of the City's population which will comprise a plurality of all New Yorkers sometime in the next decade. In this context there has never been a greater

need to retain the contributions that Puerto Rican/Latino/Latin American courses make to the education of all our students, providing them with a critical understanding of their dynamic urban environment.

It would be lamentable to abandon CUNY's historical commitment to educating our students for the multicultural and interdependent world in which they will live. The PRLAS Discipline Council strongly believes that a 42-credit General Education program will force Colleges to make difficult choices that may very well leave little room for existing diversity requirements. We find this unacceptable and look to the CUNY Board of Trustees to not only protect the gains made in the past four decades in educating our students via PRLAS courses but we urge the Board to strengthen PRLAS programs so that each CUNY student can strengthen her/his foundation in the liberal arts.

Puerto Rican/Latino/Latin American Studies Disciplinary Council
City University of New York
PRLASCOUNCIL@listserver.jjay.cuny.edu