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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UC BOARS Passes Ethnic Studies Requirement

Press release

Oakland, CA, 8 November 2020 — The University of California Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (UC BOARS) has voted unanimously to investigate the feasibility of a new ethnic studies admissions requirement. The policy would require incoming students from the class of 2031 and beyond to have completed at least one semester of ethnic studies, with two semesters being recommended, when applying to a University of California school. Following this vote, the UC Academic Senate will now be tasked with appointing university faculty to serve on an A-G Ethnic Studies Faculty Workgroup, which will determine the specific course criteria and guidelines for approval of high school-level A-G ethnic studies classes.

The move to implement ethnic studies as an A-G subject course comes a month after Governor Gavin Newsom's decision to veto AB 331, a bill that would have mandated ethnic studies as a high school graduation requirement across California, on the grounds that the model curriculum proposal was insufficiently inclusive and balanced. It also follows Gov. Newsom's approval a few months ago of a measure to make ethnic studies a graduation requirement across the California State University (CSU) system. The UC's decision will likely catalyze development of an ethnic studies curriculum in the California Department of Education (CDE), as the CDE will be responsible for ensuring that all California school districts have an accessible model curriculum to adopt in their high schools.

GENup congratulates the UC BOARS on their decision to promote institutional change and more fully fulfill their commitment to underrepresented students, and appreciate the work that our collegiate chapters did in making this proposition pass. We believe that this decision will set us on a path to a full ethnic studies mandate, which will encourage more schools to offer ethnic studies courses to their students, as well as making ethnic studies be taken more seriously as a crucial part of every student's education.