

**American Multicultural Studies  
Self-Study 2022-23**

**Fall 2022-Spring 2023**

**American Multicultural Studies  
Self-Study 2022-23**

- A. Program Context and Curriculum
- B. Assessment
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### **A. Program Context and Curriculum**

The most important thing to know about the American Multicultural Studies Department (AMCS) at Sonoma State University (SSU) is that virtually its entire curriculum is embedded into the university's General Education (GE) pattern. More than 90 percent of the courses taught by our department are GE courses. Our being enmeshed within this larger campus curricular structure creates for us a high floor, but also a low ceiling. We can fill even more sections than the university currently chooses to allot to us, but we cannot fill non-GE, dedicated AMCS courses for majors. Relatively many students take AMCS courses, but relatively few students major in AMCS. The reader of this program review should always keep this situation in mind.

In the fall of 1969, only one year after the student strike at San Francisco State University which led to the first Ethnic Studies program in the country, an SSU faculty governance group led by Black professors Levell Holmes and Willie Garrett founded a Division of American Ethnic Studies, offering degree programs in Afro-American studies, Mexican-American studies, and Native American studies. Each area had its own curriculum, class listings, and major requirements, although they shared a common chair. Professor Holmes told the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat* in a November 21, 1969 article, "Our approach is inclusive, not the exclusive hierarchical approach which has dominated the educational scene thus far. The Negro is ignorant about his past, but so is every American. It has been too difficult to separate ourselves from Europe. The European culture has inundated us." Professor Holmes also noted that the new division and programs were designed not by one group or faculty alone, but by "administrators, students, and the community" working with the faculty to "determine the vision."

Joining Holmes and Garrett were Professors Ernest Martinez, Isaias De La Rosa, David Peri, and Valesta Jenkins. In the 1980s and 1990s, under the direction of Larry Shinagawa and James (Jim) Gray, the American Ethnic Studies division transformed into two discrete departments in 1989: AMCS and Mexican American Studies, which later was renamed Chicano and Latino Studies (CALS). Native American Studies (NAMS) currently does not offer a major, nor does it have departmental standing, although it is an active program with a minor.

With this new AMCS identity came several tenure-track faculty hires and the creation of a new curriculum, which eventually took hold in AY 97-98. The new curriculum invested heavily in GE courses. Department student-to-faculty ratio (SFR) rose, as did class size, and the number of majors, from an average of about 15 majors a year in the early 1990s to an average of about 25 majors a year in the late 1990s. Throughout its history up to the present, AMCS has been among the entire university's leaders in SFR, which is both to the detriment and advantage of the department, as articulated in the first paragraph of this document.

Perhaps for a number of reasons, including faculty effectiveness, an intriguing new curriculum, significant GE representation, an active feeder program with Santa Rosa Junior College, and our teaching preparation tracks, the number of AMCS majors

increased steeply after the turn of the century. The total leveled around 65 throughout the decade before declining dramatically beginning in 2009. AMCS had 86 majors in 2004, but a decade later it could barely raise a dozen, dropping to a low of nine in Fall 2012.

The department made a curriculum revision in AY 13-14, in conjunction with a concurrent program review, in order to address this decline in majors and graduates. Two main factors characterized the new curriculum: 1) the creation of seven different advising pathways (now being reduced to four due to a lack of student interest in three of them), including a concentration in Africana Studies; 2) the outsourcing of much of the AMCS curriculum to related interdisciplinary departments such as CALS and Women and Gender Studies (WGS), as well as the NAMS minor program. AMCS majors now can take a much wider range of courses for major credit than prior to the revision. With only three full-time faculty members and carrying a disproportionate burden of the university's relentless GE expectations, it is impossible for AMCS to fully provide its own curriculum without the input of other departments.

For about a decade, several people have felt it might be wise for AMCS to merge with Chicano/Latino Studies (CALS) or Women and Gender Studies (WGS) or both. The departments talked about such a plan about five years ago but did not come to any agreement. Talks between the departments and administration about how to collaborate continue to this day.

AMCS takes an interdisciplinary and comparative approach to teaching students about the importance of race and ethnicity to people living in the United States. Our courses provide students with the theoretical foundation to understand the complexities of these issues while training them to develop cultural competence, critical thinking, and leadership skills that will empower them to navigate their communities and the world. Particularly our courses focus on the histories and cultures of African Americans, Latino/as, Asian Americans, and Native Americans, so that students may understand more deeply America's multicultural heritage and future. We also address the diasporic and transnational aspects of these peoples' experiences.

AMCS is committed to graduating students who have the knowledge and skills to live and work productively and competently as culturally informed citizens who can make positive impacts on their communities in an increasingly diverse world. Students who complete our major or minor program will have the tools to adapt to a rapidly changing multicultural environment. At the core of our mission is the hope that our work will lead to a better world.

Students who have graduated with an AMCS degree now work in the fields of education, personnel administration, business, law, human resources, public health, public relations, social services, and environmental planning. AMCS provides a sound foundation for graduate school in many traditional disciplines and emerging multidisciplinary fields of inquiry.

AMCS has a very important place on campus and a long history, thus it sees its future somewhat brightly in spite of institutional neglect. It always has had a departmental mission beyond that of service to its majors. It always has been committed to educating the wider campus community. AMCS courses are often the primary exposure a student may have to issues of race and ethnicity in a college setting. AMCS provides a forum for students to explore issues surrounding race and ethnicity and to understand their own place within U.S. racial paradigms. We provide curricular diversity and breadth to students in the School of Arts and Humanities, while other departments with larger numbers of majors provide more specialized curricula.

AMCS experienced a steady rise in declared majors, and most importantly, graduates, in the years that followed the 2014 curriculum revision and had an unbroken record of upward mobility from then until the university’s operations and enrollment numbers were disrupted by the pandemic. In AY 20-21, AMCS graduated 23 students, its largest such cohort in at least 15 years, before its number of graduates receded sharply during the pandemic. It is unclear to the department whether the decline in AMCS graduates is strictly related to the nationwide and campus wide decline in admissions over the last few years, or if there are additional factors preventing students from becoming AMCS majors.

**AMCS MAJOR/GRADUATES/MINORS OVER LAST 13 YEARS**

AY	Majors	Graduates	Minors
2009-2010	28	10	15
2010-2011	20	11	9
2011-2012	9	13	12
2012-2013	11	11	14
2013-2014	18	9	14
2014-2015	20	3	12
2015-2016	22	7	8
2016-2017	26	14	13
2017-2018	34	13	9
2018-2019	41	9	18
2019-2020	45	9	17
2020-2021	22	23	13
2021-2022	19	8	13

During its period of regrowth, the AMCS department did not see itself targeted by the SSU administration for any increase in resources or tenure-track hires, even as peer departments that currently have less majors and lower SFRs and course enrollments per semester than AMCS, such as CALS, have received such consideration. Only with the addition of a new, state-mandated, GE category in Ethnic Studies (Area F) in 2021-22 did AMCS get funded for a new tenure-track line, but even that resulted in no net numerical gain for the department, due to another faculty member being hired by another institution and leaving SSU a year earlier. The AMCS faculty is the most racially diverse on campus and additional hiring lines would no doubt continue that trend, which is no small consideration due to SSU's having an overwhelmingly white faculty.

AMCS faculty have believed for years that the administration does not particularly value the department's contribution to campus, as evidenced by this lack of hiring as well as the department's being limited to teaching GE courses. AMCS faculty also believe that the department's mission, perhaps more than any other department's on the campus, supports the Sonoma State Strategic Plan's core value of diversity and social justice. Indeed, the AMCS department feels that the SSU administration's lack of regard for it serves as a glaring and obvious self-reproach of what it claims to be a core value.

The AMCS program learning outcomes (PLOs) align closely not only with the SSU Strategic Plan but also WASC Core Competencies, such as written and oral communication and information literacy. Our tight-knit alignment with GE forces all of our instructors to conscientiously and explicitly address the ties between their curricula and the WASC Core Competencies that make up a central part of SSU's GE curriculum. Because the AMCS curriculum is almost entirely a GE curriculum, our courses go through a rigorous vetting process simply to get into existence, and our faculty must explain to various committees how we meet these requirements and make these connections to various learning goals and outcomes. Over 90 percent of AMCS courses already meet the GE learning outcomes and are being assessed for WASC via their required GE signature assignments.

All AMCS syllabi conform to SSU standard, including the listing of all GE learning outcomes on course syllabi. Professors provide course-specific renditions of the AMCS PLOs on their syllabi, depending on which course is being taught. Because our curriculum is so clearly aligned with so many GE categories, our faculty must take into account the GE learning objectives in order to create intersections between GE goals and AMCS goals. We also review the syllabi of cross-listed courses to insure their continued relevance to the latest developments in ethnic studies. We vet as a department any Area F proposals by other departments requesting cross-listing with AMCS.

### **AMCS MAJOR CURRICULUM—PROPOSED AY 22-23**

AMCS Major: 40 units total=22-unit core + 18 additional units

*Lower Division Core—12 units*

- AMCS 210: Introduction to Ethnic Studies (3 units)
- AMCS 225: Racism and Resistance: Black Americans (3)
- AMCS 260: Ethnicity in the Arts, Culture, and Media (3)
- AMCS 277: Asian American Experience (currently being developed) (3)

*Upper Division Core—6 units—take at least two of the following*

- AMCS 355: Language and Ethnicity (3)
- AMCS 360: Ethnic Literature (3)
- AMCS 392: Race in Film and Media (3)

*Methods Course—4 units—students must take this course*

- AMCS 480: Research and Methodology (4)

*Pathways—18 units—up to 6 units can be lower-division (choose one pathway)*

Comparative Ethnic Studies Pathway: Can be any AMCS, CALS, NAMS, or WGS courses, or approved catalog courses from another dept., and any approved Area F course

Critical Race, Gender, and Sexuality Pathway: Can be any AMCS or WGS courses

Africana Studies Concentration: being redeveloped

Multicultural Education Pathway: Can be any AMCS or any 400-level EDUC courses

## AMCS LEARNING OUTCOMES

Our learning goals and outcomes broadly conceive the discipline of ethnic studies, primarily through African American studies and Asian American studies (other campus departments and programs specialize in Chicano/Latino Studies and Native American Studies) in ways that allow our faculty to teach their specialties within larger contexts. Our courses acknowledge the multiracial nature of the American landscape within the fields of African American and Asian American studies.

AMCS narrows its PLOs to three categories: knowledge, values, and skills. Below is further clarification of these PLOs, as well as a required “curriculum map” that illustrates how well our courses address these PLOs, to varying degrees. Please use the numbered PLOs and the linked AMCS course descriptions as a key to understanding the curriculum map.

AMCS course descriptions and titles link:

[https://catalog.sonoma.edu/content.php?filter%5B27%5D=AMCS&filter%5B29%5D=&filter%5Bcourse\\_type%5D=-1&filter%5Bkeyword%5D=&filter%5B32%5D=1&filter%5Bcpage%5D=1&cur\\_cat\\_oid=5&expand=&navoid=259&search\\_database=Filter](https://catalog.sonoma.edu/content.php?filter%5B27%5D=AMCS&filter%5B29%5D=&filter%5Bcourse_type%5D=-1&filter%5Bkeyword%5D=&filter%5B32%5D=1&filter%5Bcpage%5D=1&cur_cat_oid=5&expand=&navoid=259&search_database=Filter)

Note: Any AMCS course linked above that has not been taught in the last five years, or any AMCS course that is currently in the course curriculum discontinuation process has been excluded from the curriculum map. Only active AMCS courses are included on the curriculum map.

Knowledge

- 1) Study the roles of race and ethnicity in U.S. society, both historically and today.
- 2) Analyze how economic and political forces intersect with race and ethnicity in the United States.
- 3) Understand the aesthetic and creative contributions of non-whites in the United States.
- 4) Address the representation of racial and ethnic minorities in American culture, history, and politics.
- 5) Understand the relationships between ideology and power.
- 6) Study the intersectional natures of race, ethnicity, class, gender, religion, region, nationality, and other factors.

Values

- 7) Develop an understanding of how race and ethnicity are tied to personal values.
- 8) Gain an appreciation for the role non-whites have played in building America.
- 9) Foster a moral and political commitment to multiculturalism.
- 10) Understand the connections between individual achievement and community involvement.

Skills

- 11) Build critical thinking abilities and apply them to real-life issues of race.
- 12) Develop oral and written communication skills.
- 13) Develop information literacy and/or critical textual reading skills.

Next to each of the 13 AMCS PLOs will be a letter “A” “B” “C”. These letters correspond to the depth of competence students are expected to achieve in various AMCS courses, as related to each PLO: A-introductory knowledge, values, or skills; B-developed knowledge, values, or skills; C-demonstrated knowledge, values, or skills. For example, the designation “1A” in the table indicates that students should be expected to gain an introductory knowledge of the roles of race and ethnicity in U.S. society, both historically and today.

**AMCS CURRICULUM MAP**

Course	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
AMCS 125	A				A	A			A	B		C	B
AMCS 210	A	A	B	B	B	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	B
AMCS 225	A	B		A	B				A		A		A



AMCS 260	A		B	B			A			A	B	B	B
AMCS 350	A		A	A		B	C	B	C	A	B	C	B
AMCS 355	B		C	C		B					B	B	
AMCS 360	B		C	C		C		B			B	B	
AMCS 392	B	C	B	C	B						B	B	B
AMCS 420	B				C	C	B			B		B	
AMCS 480	B											C	C

Other than adding courses in Asian American studies to account for our latest hire, and trimming superfluous course listings and pathways, AMCS does not foresee itself making major curricular changes in the next few years. Much of our curriculum is not in the hands of our department but rather in that of WGS, CALS, and NAMS. We have found it difficult to provide unique course content for our Africana Studies Concentration following the departure of a faculty member whose courses were key to its curriculum.

**B. Assessment**

The AMCS department engages in no direct assessment of its courses, but because the overwhelming majority of our courses are GE courses with signature assignments, we feel that our courses are indeed being rigorously assessed for their alignment with GE course criteria and learning outcomes, particularly area F. Because a great many of our program outcomes are specifically and purposefully aligned with GE learning outcomes, we feel no need to do any further assessment. The department feels that the university’s assessment teams would indicate to us if our signature assignments were not properly reflecting the WASC accreditation standards, as measured by our GE curriculum. The university’s vetting process for GE courses is, in fact, our assessment process, too.

If AMCS is required to conduct its own direct assessment of its courses, then the department proposes the following process moving forward, and would be willing to indicate its cooperation with this structure in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will be completed in conjunction with the completion of this program review:

- 1) The AMCS department agrees to a common student survey that must be completed as part of all GE signature assignments. Students cannot pass the signature assignment or the course without submitting the survey. How will the survey be delivered anonymously and online? Does the university help departments create such assessment tools?

- 2) The AMCS department will determine if these surveys should focus particularly on the development of student values, because course content and skills criteria are already largely governed by their GE alignment.
- 3) AMCS tenure-track faculty submit all GE syllabi and signature assignments to the chair (in addition to the AC, as already done) by week one of every semester.
- 4) AMCS department chair is responsible for vetting signature assignments for alignment with program learning outcomes as well as distributing assessment surveys to TT faculty.
- 5) TT faculty are responsible for returning assessment survey data to department chair seven days after the end of finals week.
- 6) Department chair must create a one-page assessment report every semester based on student surveys.

Because AMCS carries a significant FTE (full-time student equivalent) per semester as a result of its GE workload, much of its teaching is necessarily done by adjunct faculty. Additionally, about forty percent of the AMCS curriculum is outsourced to other departments. AMCS has no other choice but to do this as long as the university expects it to carry significant GE workloads as a department while being staffed by only three full-time faculty members. A great deal of the AMCS curriculum is out of the hands of the tenure-track faculty and thus makes assessment quite difficult, even if AMCS engages in assessment of its own courses.

Another assessment option would be to attach some kind of measure to the final student projects developed in the department's research and methodology seminar AMCS 480. This course, however, is taught only half-time by AMCS (the other half by CALS), and is usually under threat of cancellation due to low enrollment.

AMCS robustly addressed two of its main assessment goals resulting from its previous program review. AMCS now successfully engages in regular peer review of adjunct faculty and encourages instructors to pursue the university's cumulative evaluation process. Making this change was one of the main assessment suggestions of the last program review, along with the curricular move toward outsourcing and pathways described in the first section of this program review. AMCS counts on three instructors in particular for almost all of its adjuncting needs. These instructors are experienced and reliable and between them have been working with the department for about 25 years.

### **C. Faculty**

AMCS has two modest short-term goals: 1) to properly configure our Africana Studies Concentration; 2) to create an Asian American Studies Concentration. The first might be addressed by a rethinking of the AMCS major core. The second would require us to hire a new professor. More immediate goals are to create a joint major with Women and Gender Studies around race and gender/sexuality, and to continue to find ways to collaborate with other departments across campus.

Obviously, the dream scenario would be for AMCS to be treated like every other department and have enough faculty to teach a full-fledged ethnic studies curriculum. AMCS faculty find it curious that our peer department CALS has five full-time faculty to

our three, even though more students take AMCS courses per semester than CALS courses, and AMCS has had more majors than CALS in the past (this has changed after the pandemic).

AMCS is made up of three full-time faculty members and then a fourth affiliated faculty member who teaches one course per semester but also serves as an indispensable member of our community, and was our previous chair. About half of our courses are taught by adjunct faculty. Since the last program review AMCS has lost two full-time faculty members and has replaced them with scholars in similar fields. The department has for a long time had two full-time specialists in African American Studies and one in Asian American Studies. Most of our adjunct faculty members specialize in African American Studies as well. Although it would seem that with all these professors of African American Studies it would not be hard for AMCS to fill its concentration in Africana Studies but readers should know that almost all of their African American Studies courses are necessarily represented in the AMCS major core.

Currently there are three full-time AMCS professors. Michael Ezra, the current department chair, came to the department in 2003. Patrick Johnson, an assistant professor, came to SSU in 2019. Katherine Lee, an assistant professor, came to AMCS in 2022. Kim Hester-Williams of the English Department also teaches two courses a year for the department and is a full member of the department from a community standpoint.

Broadly speaking, the teaching and research interests of all faculty members explore how race and ethnicity intersect with power and inequality. Ezra specializes in post-World War II African American history and culture. He is the author of two books and the editor of another two, in addition to founding and editing the peer-reviewed *Journal of Civil and Human Rights*. Johnson specializes in Black popular culture and has published a series of articles focusing on African American representation in television. Lee's research focuses on the politics of academic writing and its impact on students of color. Hester-Williams specializes in U.S. colonial literature, but has published in a wide range of areas pertaining to African American culture and is the co-editor of a recent book.

The AMCS faculty are the most racially diverse of any department, constituting the entirety of SSU's tenure-track and tenured Black professorship. Every full-time hire that the department has made since 2003, both tenure-track and one-year, has resulted in a person of color being hired for the position. Whereas many departments at Sonoma State have for decades continued to have an all-white faculty, AMCS for decades has continued to find ways to successfully recruit strong candidates of color who go on to earn tenure and promotion at SSU. Despite the SSU administration's bemoaning of the lack of faculty diversity, it continually overlooks AMCS for hiring lines, despite the department's standing as an obvious counterpoint to the dismal record of almost every department at this institution.

All of our faculty teach GE courses. The only non-GE course we teach regularly is AMCS 480, our core methodology course taught once a year by Dr. Lee. Every other semester this course is taught by CALS. The course rarely gets over 10 enrollees in a

given semester and is often targeted for administrative cuts in lean budget times. GE classes have 30 or more students in them and even the upper-division ones have an introductory-type nature. Our faculty have no choice but to teach to non-majors at SSU in order to survive. We almost never teach to an audience of AMCS majors and minors. Some AMCS faculty are comfortable with this situation and some of our faculty are not.

The department is well-represented on key campus committees. Johnson is a member of the GE subcommittee and Ezra represents the department on the school tenure/promotion committee and the school on the university's Educational Policies Committee.

Because there are not many AMCS majors, the departmental advising load does not seem burdensome to individual faculty. The department chair usually does most of the advising in any given semester. Department chairs have three-year terms. Ezra is in the first year of his third overall term as department chair.

Because of the relatively low salaries at SSU and the relatively high cost of living in this area, some of our faculty teach during the winter and summer. Faculty in AMCS would like higher salaries and are at the low-end of the scale, even for SSU.

Despite our usual teaching load of four GE courses per semester totalling well over 100 students, as well as summer and winter classes, all of the AMCS faculty remain productive and active scholars who publish peer-reviewed work regularly. We do not share the administration's seeming disregard for our capabilities.

#### **D. Program Resources**

Sonoma State University is not a research university and does not pretend to be one. Although the university standards for tenure and promotion call for peer-reviewed scholarship, we are starting to see some departments, following the university's requirement for them to develop their own tenure and promotion standards, beginning to move away from peer review as a requirement. While all AMCS faculty continue to publish peer-reviewed work, it is safe to assume that all of us need to at least sometimes go outside the SSU environment to get that work done.

SSU offers limited support for faculty. AMCS faculty have a small spending budget per year. We have adequate office space, supplies, and a competent administrative coordinator. It's easy to apply for travel funds if you want to attend a conference in a given academic year. If you ask nicely enough you can get a second conference funded. There are various grants for research awarded at SSU as well. New faculty get a research start-up fund.

The IT situation at SSU is a mess, and is continually defunded, but that's not specific to AMCS.

AMCS is satisfied with the physical condition of its facilities, the amount of money budgeted to operation and expenses, and with its amount of office coverage.

### **E. Student Success**

At the heart of its mission since its founding, AMCS is invested in supporting Black students at SSU. Our recent hire of Dr. Lee expresses the department's reinvigorated commitment to Asian American students.

Because faculty in the past have reported hearing from students in our upper-division classes, "I wish I had taken an AMCS course earlier in my career. I would have become an AMCS major," we are redefining the major core to include more lower-division courses than previously.

The number of AMCS majors and graduate students was steeply rising prior to the COVID pandemic. We have taken this moment to rearticulate our curriculum to include Asian American Studies and an increased focus on lower-division courses. Our last program review resulted in a successful increase in majors due to a curriculum revision. We hope a similar pattern will emerge this time again.

AMCS attracts students of color and also first-generation students. Our AMCS 360 class taught by Kim Hester-Williams has the university's largest reverse bias gap of any course, which means that first-generation students do significantly better in the course than non-first-generation students. AMCS courses often speak to more diverse populations than the average SSU courses do.

AMCS is obviously open to everyone, and a great many students who take our courses are white, per the SSU population. We take seriously our role in providing for many students the only exposure in their college careers to questions of race and power. Because we are so closely affiliated with the GE program, we will be able to assess student success in addressing these questions via the signature assignments.

In the first section of this program review self-study we have provided statistical data about our majors.

### **F. Reflection and Plan of Action**

Over the next five years, the AMCS Department hopes to somehow capture the attention of the SSU administration in an effort to be taken as something more than just a GE-bearing workhorse. Other departments are given the liberty of low-enrolled classes and viable upper-division non-GE courses, including departments that every semester have lower FTE than AMCS despite having more FTF (full-time faculty) than AMCS. AMCS does more than many other departments do, with less resources dedicated to it, and yet consistently gets overlooked for hiring, even with the creation of GE Area F.

In lieu of any new resources, the most important AMCS goals are to define and staff its existing Africana Studies Concentration as well as develop a concentration in Asian American Studies. Concentrations are different from advising pathways in that they are officially recognized by the CSU Chancellor's Office and thus appear on student diplomas. These curricular initiatives emphasize the department's role since its founding

in the 1960s of serving African American students and its reorganization in the 1980s of serving Asian American students.

AMCS would like to see the university share its assessment data on the GE signature assignments. AMCS realizes it needs its own assessment plan and looks forward to carrying out the process detailed earlier in this report, beginning with the 23-24 academic year.

With existing resources, the AMCS department can clean up its catalog copy, further streamline and outsource its curriculum, continue to teach large GE classes, create a viable assessment plan, collaborate with other departments, particularly WGS, and possibly successfully redefine its Africana Studies Concentration. Additionally, the department calls on the administration to shift some of its GE burden to other departments and give AMCS the same luxury of having an internal curriculum that other departments have. AMCS should not be in a position where it is almost never allowed to teach small, non-major courses. Few other departments are in such a predicament, and none at SSU have been for as long as AMCS.

With additional resources, the AMCS department can create an Asian American Studies Concentration and successfully staff its African American Studies Concentration, at the very least.

## External Review Report

### American Multicultural Studies (AMCS)

March 3, 2023

Prepared by Maria Joaquina Villaseñor (California State University, Monterey Bay)

#### I. Summary & Process

The American Multicultural Studies (AMCS) major and minor program exists as a product of its rich and storied past, in a dynamic and evolving present, and with great promise for excellence in serving the students of Sonoma State University in the future. As noted in the department's self-study, the department was founded first as a Division of American Ethnic Studies in 1969 "led by Black professors Levell Holmes and Willie Garrett founded a Division of American Ethnic Studies, offering degree programs in Afro-American studies, Mexican-American studies, and Native American studies." This history matters because it is important to acknowledge that the AMCS department, the rich curriculum it offers, and students' experience of their courses is inextricably linked to the history of the student activism for Ethnic Studies of 50 years ago, and the ongoing advocacy and activism of educators who have struggled to maintain the strength of these programs over the years, riding the tumult of various economic and social crises, and the ensuing challenges to higher education that those crises produce.

In its [website description](#), the program notes, "Since it is predicted that the U.S. will be 50 percent non-white in 2050, our goal is to teach you the analytical tools for understanding the United States as a multiracial, multiethnic, multicultural, and multilingual nation and to help you shape your vision of leadership, civic engagement, and professional development for the future." In an increasingly diverse state and country, student learning about issues of ethnicity, culture, race, and the experiences, cultures, and intellectual traditions and contributions of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities is vital. Moreover, it is clear that AMCS is contributing in important ways to the achievement of Sonoma State University's [strategic priorities and core values](#). A [National Education Association \(NEA\) report](#) authored by Dr. Christine Sleeter "The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies: A Research Review" concludes that "There is significant research evidence that well-designed, well-taught ethnic studies curricula have positive academic and social outcomes for students." Streeter notes that "Ethnic studies curricula have been studied in relationship to three overlapping effects on students: academic engagement, academic achievement, and

personal empowerment.” I mention this research to point out the clear resonance between the curriculum taught by AMCS and SSU’s strategic priorities of “student success”; “academic excellence”; and “leadership cultivation.” Not only the content taught by AMCS faculty, but the faculty-student relationships and classroom communities faculty are building in their program, are clearly contributing to the positive outcomes for their students in the areas outlined above. Moreover, as noted in the department’s self-study, there is clear alignment between the AMCS program learning outcomes (PLOs), the SSU Strategic Plan, and WASC Core Competencies. This alignment clearly benefits students, as well as SSU as a whole.

I appreciate the opportunity to present my observations, findings, issues to consider, and recommendations in this report, bearing the above outlined context in mind and at the conclusion of the following process:

- A review of the AMCS 2022-2023 self-study
- A review of all syllabi for AY 2021-2022
- An SSU campus visit on Thursday, February 9 with the following components
  - A meeting with department chair Dr. Michael Ezra
  - A class observation in Dr. Katherine Lee’s AMCS 210-Introduction to Ethnic Studies course
  - A focus group discussion with five AMCS major or minor students
  - Conversations with Dr. Kim Hester-Williams, Dr. Katherine Lee, and Dr. Patrick Johnson, AMCS faculty
  - Meetings with administrators Dr. Stacey Bosick, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Graduate and Undergraduate Studies and Dr. Ed Beebout, Interim Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities
- A review of the AMCS/SSU websites

AMCS has a number of important assets including their accomplished and dedicated faculty, engaged and committed students, and a rich, varied, and relevant curriculum. As they look to the future of their program, I invite them to consider the summary of strengths and challenges below I identify below, as well as the topics for further consideration and recommendations I share.



## **II. Strengths, Challenges, and Topics for Further Consideration (Findings)**

### **a. Strengths**

#### Student outcomes and curriculum

In reviewing AMCS syllabi and talking with faculty and students, it is clear that student learning and empowerment are at the center of the work of AMCS. Syllabi clearly articulate course learning objectives and/or student learning outcomes, and students talk about having transformative learning experiences in AMCS classes. Faculty note that many AMCS major and minor students are public service oriented, and keen to apply their learning to their professional lives and to civic engagement. Multiple students in the focus group commented that their voices were heard and encouraged in their AMCS classes, and that they think the confidence this gives them, and the critical thinking skills they develop and the content knowledge they gain related to multicultural communities will serve them well in their professional, personal, and civic lives moving forward. One student noted that their AMCS classes have motivated them to pursue student leadership opportunities at SSU, an example of the way student learning in AMCS is broadening student opportunities outside of the classroom, as well!

AMCS features rich and varied course offerings with engaging content that appeals to students and includes both historical and contemporary perspectives on BIPOC communities, cultures, and intellectual traditions, and the histories and social relations out of which those emerge. In reviewing the course syllabi, it is evident that the curricular content in terms of Black/Africana Studies is particularly robust, as embedded in AMCS courses such as AMCS 165A: Race in America and AMCS 260: Arts, Ethnicity, and Culture. Students in the focus group commented on the engaging and, indeed, transformative nature of the curricular content they encountered in AMCS.

#### Enrollment and curricular collaborations

Due to the GE Area F: Ethnic Studies, AMCS benefits from healthy enrollments and a high departmental student-to-faculty ratio (SFR) per the department's self-study. My class observation occurred in a class that appeared to be at capacity with few to no open seats in sight.

While GE has largely afforded these enrollments, the AMCS department has had effective practices of collaborating around enrollments and curriculum by way of cross-listing with the Native American Studies (NAMS), Women and Gender Studies (WGS), and Chicano and Latino Studies (CALS) departments. These cross listings create a seamless, integrated learning experience for students, as attested to by both students and faculty, as well as no doubt add to the fiscal viability of relatively small

programs. One student in the focus group noted that the fact that these departments had cross-listed requirements had a positive impact on their learning, creating a greater amount of flexibility, choice, and efficiency in terms of their degree pathway.

## Faculty

The AMCS faculty are a small, but mighty, group. With just 3 tenure-line faculty with one additional faculty member who teaches in AMCS but actually has a primary appointment in another department, the department contends with managing a sizable GE area with Area F, as well as sustaining and developing its major and minor. Notwithstanding this challenging situation, the faculty are highly dedicated and effective facilitators of student learning. Per both their and their students' reports, they are always thinking about students and student needs, and providing high quality educational experiences for them. The classroom observation I conducted as a part of my external review gave me the opportunity to observe some of the finest teaching I have observed in my approximately 20 years as a higher education professional. Dr. Katherine Lee, an AMCS Assistant Professor and the instructor for the course, facilitated a highly dialogical class that still guided students to the extent that they arrived at clear conclusions that clearly aligned with Dr. Lee's intended learning outcomes related to the content for the day. In addition to providing excellent teaching for their students, the faculty are all top notch scholars with a high degree of scholarly achievement in their respective research areas, influencing their fields through the publication of their own research, but also through editing important journals including impactful and groundbreaking special editions. In sum, the faculty are accomplished in a variety of areas and are impressive in their dedication to their work. Last, but certainly not least, I would highlight as a strength the respectful, effective, collegial way in which AMCS faculty collaborate with each other, something that, as we know, cannot be taken for granted in academic departments. This effective collaboration can no doubt be leveraged as they work together to address the challenges that they face as a department.

## **b. Challenges**

### Size of major and relationship to GE Area F

AMCS does laudable work in terms of educating the broader SSU community of students, particularly through the offering of courses in GE Area F. However, as illustrated by the narrative and accompanying table in the self-study, the AMCS major itself is small, though it showed an upward trend in enrollment and number of graduates in recent years up until 2021-2022 when there was a decline in enrollments. In its self-study, the department notes that this decline coincided with the pandemic, as well as downward trends in enrollment more generally (that is, more broadly at SSU, and

beyond that, in the state and nation). The small size of the major means that it is difficult for the department to sustain courses that are specifically for students in the major because of small enrollments. One student in the focus group noted their feeling of disappointment every time there is a class cancellation due to low course enrollment. This means that when courses are offered, very few will not have students in them taking the course for GE Area F. This can be challenging for faculty, as well as for students who are in the major, as it means that most courses need to be offered at an introductory, general level. For students in the major, this means there are limitations in terms of how much advanced study they can pursue, in terms of how much depth of knowledge they can gain.

While the GE Area F does provide stable enrollments, another challenge with it is the departmental responsibility involved in providing oversight for that area of the curriculum. Because of the nature of the scholarly area (in a multicultural, multiracial society everyone has a lived experience of race, ethnicity, and culture which can confuse some into thinking that they have adequate expertise in the scholarly area to design and offer curriculum) there is a lot vetting of courses and explaining of the field that falls on AMCS faculty in terms of their faculty peers. With so few tenure-line faculty, this can become a capacity issue, as faculty are tasked with this significant oversight work at the same time that they are sustaining and developing their major, teaching their courses, producing scholarship, and engaging in other service.

#### Student community and professional pathways

Students in the focus group expressed their desire to experience a greater sense of community. Perhaps especially because they cannot count on their courses to provide that as so many students in their courses are not fellow students in the major but GE Area F students, they note that they would like to have more opportunities outside of the classroom to meet, connect and engage with one another. Additionally, students in the focus group expressed a desire for more guidance on how the major prepares them for their professions, as well as more information on volunteer and internship opportunities. This discussion of future professions could perhaps be tied to community building efforts. A stronger and more thriving student community could ultimately also be beneficial in terms of possibly contributing to recruiting and retaining more students in the major and minor. Last, I would note that given where colleges and universities are in relation to the pandemic, it is no surprise that offering students the experience of being in community with each other is currently a challenge. This challenge of the moment is certainly not unique to AMCS right now.

### Small number of tenure line faculty

Undoubtedly, the small number of tenure line faculty is a challenge for AMCS. While there are budgetary constraints currently statewide and at SSU due to downward enrollment trends, nonetheless, that this is a challenge for the department must be noted. Indeed, in order to continue to grow, develop, and thrive, another tenure-track faculty person would be of great advantage if not, essential. The department finds itself in a dilemma because it could benefit from attracting a greater number of majors, but with so few tenure-line faculty, it is quite difficult for the department to engage in significant program development, outreach, and community building with students outside the classroom. In terms of the curriculum and building out curricular offerings, another specialist in Asian American Studies would be of particular benefit if and when a future tenure line is added to the department.

### **c. Topics for further consideration**

The following are a set of topics for further consideration intended to help guide future conversations among AMCS faculty; they are being offered without particular recommendations, as AMCS faculty are in the best position to be able to imagine and assess possibilities for moving forward in these areas should they choose to do so.

### The American Multicultural Studies nomenclature

The self-study notes that the name “American Multicultural Studies” was adopted in 1989 at a time when AMCS and what is now CALS were created as two separate departments after initially existing as one American Ethnic Studies division. While the term “multicultural” and multiculturalism as such were common when the term was selected and in the decade after, it has become less widely used since that time. In the meantime, the movement to include Ethnic Studies in the K-12 system, as well as require Ethnic Studies across the 23 campuses of the CSU means that “Ethnic Studies” as a term describing the field of study has become more widely visible and, indeed, legible by the public. This is not to advocate for a name change, but simply to encourage AMCS to reflect on their department and degree name, and whether, at this juncture, it still aligns with what they wish to communicate and how they want to be understood.

### Collaboration with CALS, WGS, and NAMS

Collaborating with CALS and WGS as departments and NAMS as a program seems to be an area where a great deal of important work already occurs in terms of, for example, curricular pathways and cross-listing as discussed earlier. However, reflecting on whether and how these collaborations could be further leveraged and strengthened is a topic that I invite AMCS to consider. For example, in the challenge I outline above with regards to student community and professional pathways, are there ways that

AMCS could collaborate more effectively or frequently in terms of developing a way to provide more community building opportunities for students such as organizing co-curricular events, graduation celebrations, etc.? Given the small tenure-line faculty size of AMCS, working more with these other departments could be of great advantage.

### Curriculum

AMCS courses, by nature of the degree program and published course descriptions are broad in terms of analyzing the cultures, histories, and experiences of different racial and ethnic groups (for example, AMCS 260: Ethnicity in Arts, Culture and Media or AMCS 360: Ethnic Literature). At the same time, students and faculty express interest in having more group specific courses, specifically in Black/Africana Studies and Asian American Studies in the curriculum. Thus, a topic to consider moving forward is whether and how to further develop the aspects of the curriculum that are group specific. Additionally, it would be important to consider whether and how to develop the existing courses to further incorporate more comparative approaches or approaches that emphasize systems, structures, and/or themes rather than focusing on specific groups. How do these two aspects of the curriculum—the group specific and the broad and/or comparative—fit together or complement each other in a way that creates cohesion?

### III. Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered for both AMCS faculty, as well as administrators to consider (implementing some of these recommendations would be more within faculty purview, and some would be appropriate for administrators or other campus partners to implement).

For AMCS faculty:

1. Leverage signature aspects of SSU curriculum such as Second Year Research and Creative Experience (SYRCE), and Humanities Learning Community

In reading course syllabi and talking with students, it is clear that AMCS faculty have participated in these programs by offering courses and other learning experiences. I encourage faculty to consider whether and how they might add to these offerings, or sustain and enrich the offerings they already have in these areas. These experiences are clearly impactful for students and could be effective means for recruiting and retaining students into the AMCS major or minor. At least one of the students I spoke with in the focus group shared that they had become interested in AMCS as a result of their participation in the Humanities Learning Community, and that it was a transformative learning experience.

## 2. Build and/or strengthen the collaboration with Education and potentially other programs

[In 2021](#), Governor Gavin Newsom signed legislation making California the first state in the country to require high school students to take one semester-long Ethnic Studies course. Thus, beginning the 2025-2026 school year, all California high schools will begin offering Ethnic Studies courses. Given this reality, there will be a growing need for high school teachers who are qualified to teach the subject. In light of this reality, it would be worthwhile to explore a collaboration with Education to further develop a teacher training pathway (AMCS does already offer a Multicultural Education Pathway) and/or perhaps even a certificate program. Building this and making it more visible to students could be advantageous in terms of drawing students into the major or minor. Moreover, some of the tenure-track faculty have Education expertise and are well positioned to work on this.

## 3. Identify and/or create opportunities to build community among AMCS students

As discussed above, students shared that their AMCS community is important to them, and they would like more opportunities to connect and build relationships with each other as AMCS majors/minors. However, given the small size of the tenure-line faculty and all the demands on their time between teaching, research, and service, it would be difficult to spend time developing programs or events for students. However, faculty could encourage students to form an AMCS student organization (there seems to be a comparable [student organization](#) in existence for WGS) and/or could reach out to campus partners such as student support services, student life, or [The HUB Cultural Center](#) to see how they might bring their students to campus events, or somehow align themselves strategically with other campus efforts to provide experiences for AMCS students to be in community with each other.

For administration and other campus partners:

### 1. Consider prioritizing overall averages for AMCS FTEs when making decisions about course cancellations as a consistent practice

Overall, it seems that course enrollments for GE Area F courses are robust. At the same time, small courses for majors only have often not been possible to run given low course enrollments. However, a consistent practice of prioritizing overall averages for AMCS FTEs when making decisions of whether to allow a major course to run despite low course enrollment, could help in terms of allowing faculty the opportunity to teach these courses, and to allow students the opportunities to take these courses. As long as

the averages signaled fiscal viability, this approach has the potential to not result in a net loss for the university. At the same time, it would allow the university to demonstrate its commitment to its core values of diversity and social justice in a tangible way that would benefit student learning and student experience directly.

2. Ensure that SSU student recruitment efforts include AMCS as a viable major option, and widely advertise the minor

Smaller major and minor programs are often overlooked or worse, misunderstood, by offices of Admissions and other departments tasked with recruiting and advising prospective and new students. Recruitment materials need to be reviewed periodically to ensure that the information that is being provided to prospective students is accurate, timely, and attractive. Faculty could be helpful in providing feedback or corrections to materials, but these materials ultimately must be produced in alignment with campus processes for producing the recruitment materials for all majors. Information about potential professional pathways is especially important to students who want to know what professional opportunities would be available to them with the degree after graduation. If this information has not been revised recently, it should be revised to include Ethnic Studies teaching in high schools and K-12 more broadly, as well as work in the area of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) which is a growing sector of the labor market with opportunities for AMCS graduates to work in either public or private entities.

## **Arts and Humanities Curriculum Committee (AHCC)**

Re: American Multicultural Studies Self-Study 2022-23

AHCC wants to thank AMCS for a cogent and concise document and a frank and powerful analysis of the situation the department finds itself in.

As pointed out by AMCS, the department carries a large burden of GE classes – 90 percent of its curriculum serve students from all disciplines. Yet while Sonoma State has come to rely on these courses, it has not provided sufficient support to help the department to offer “its own [major] curriculum without the input of other departments.” It also places a burden on the individual faculty, since the current situation forces them to carry a 4/4 course load instead of the usual 3/3 load observed in other departments.

Despite having only four tenure-track positions (one of which is shared with the English department), AMCS is to be commended for its work with other departments to ensure that the curriculum for the major does not suffer in terms of quality. It would be preferable to have the resources to teach the curriculum within the department however, as this provides better visibility, coherence, and student support. AHCC agrees with AMCS that the current staffing situation has detrimental effects on the courses offered. As the self-study states, “we have found it difficult to provide unique course content for our Africana Studies Concentration following the departure of a faculty member whose courses were key to its curriculum.” Hiring ensures continuity and clarity, and AHCC’s hope is that SSU can provide the department with more tenure-track lines in the future.

AMCS provides clear learning outcomes for its courses. As stated in the study, the department “engages in no direct assessment of its courses” but because most of its courses are GE, AHCC agrees that there is “no need to do any further assessment.”

AHCC feels that the proposed steps for assessment – should AMCS be required to conduct direct assessment of its courses – are adequate but agrees that a detailed assessment of its major is made difficult, since much of the curriculum is delivered by other departments.

The self-study ascertains resources for scholarship are few and limited, but that operating expenses are adequate; offices and classrooms are adequate as well. However, the health of the department (and its curriculum) is negatively impacted by a sustained lack of hiring.

While the faculty of AMCS is comprised of distinguished scholars, the department is facing shortages and limitations in every area of its expertise. With a very low number of tenure-track faculty, it’s hard to plan, deliver, or expand areas that are favored and/or wanted by students. As expressed in the self-study, it is unlikely that the department will be able to increase the number of their majors if SSU views AMCS as a “GE-bearing workhorse.” Even with the creation of GE Area F, AMCS has not seen the support required for sustaining a rigorous and comprehensive major curriculum. And since “AMCS courses often speak to more diverse populations than the average SSU courses do,” AHCC’s hope is that the university will offer strong support for AMCS and its goals of inclusivity, equity, and social justice.

AHCC commends AMCS for its honest and wide-ranging assessment of the department, its mission, and its important role on our campus. And we couldn’t agree more that their work is important to create a better campus and better world.



July 31, 2023



### **Dean's Response to the American Multi-Cultural Studies Self-Study**

The American Multi-Cultural Studies Department (AMCS) of Sonoma State University has long played a vital role in supporting campus core values of diversity, inclusion, and a deeper understanding of racial and cultural issues. The department has also become a general education work horse, especially since the creation of GE Area F, Ethnic Studies.

But the high demand for Area F courses, combined with recent drops in enrollment in the wake of the pandemic, has created problems for the program. As external reviewer Maria Joaquina Villaseñor noted in her thoughtful review, the small team of permanent faculty members in the program are being asked to teach a schedule made up almost entirely of GE courses, while having less opportunity to develop and teach non-GE upper division courses in their discipline due to low enrollment. I view this as particularly disadvantageous for our younger tenure track faculty who have been limited in their opportunities to develop and grow as instructors.

The department's self-study suggested leveraging the department's overall high SFR and FTE rates to allow for the offering of some low enrolled courses. It also suggested more attention by the university to advertising and promoting what AMCS has to offer as a major.

There are also potential new opportunities to explore. Dr. Villaseñor noted that students in California high schools, starting in the 2025-26 academic year, will be required to take a semester of ethnic studies. She suggested working with the School of Education to develop a teacher training pathway or certificate program. This is an exciting idea with great potential.

The external reviewer also recommended collaborating with programs such as Chicano and Latino Studies, Native American Studies and Women and Gender Studies to create co-curricular activities and community building events. I also believe these kinds of collaboration could ultimately reduce the GE burden on AMCS and address some of the enrollment issues around non-GE courses. It might also lead to future resources for the creation of an Asian American Studies concentration and the proper staffing of the African American Studies concentration.

Despite ongoing challenges, AMCS has a strong program and excellent faculty. The self-study provides many worthwhile ideas for supporting the department and helping it thrive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward Beebout". The signature is stylized and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Edward Beebout

Interim Dean-School of Arts and Humanities

# UPRS Findings and Recommendations Report

Chair Michael Ezra represented the American Multicultural Studies program at a meeting with UPRS on October 11, 2023, to discuss the program review materials submitted during the 2022-23 and 2023-24 academic years.

## **Curriculum**

A brief overview of the AMCS at SSU, as mentioned in the external reviewer's remarks, states that the American Multicultural Studies (AMCS) major and minor program exists as a product of its rich and storied past, in a dynamic and evolving present, and with great promise for excellence in serving the students of Sonoma State University in the future."

The curriculum is described as being quite robust and geared toward meeting the requirements of the ever-increasing diversity in the United States and also at Sonoma State. The program learning outcomes (PLOs) align closely with the SSU Strategic Plan and also Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Core Competencies, such as written and oral communication, information literacy, and critical thinking. With the courses offering exposure to issues of race and ethnicity in a college setting to the student, diversity issues are an integral part of instruction. The program is highly interdisciplinary in nature. The AMCS curriculum is completely embedded into the General Education (GE) program at SSU, with heavy participation in the program's GE courses but few actual AMCS majors. This imbalance causes problems in terms of faculty motivation as they are unable to offer the courses they would like within their speciality areas.

## **Assessment**

There is no direct assessment of AMCS courses. However, a majority of their courses are GE courses that include signature assignments; these are assessed for alignment with GE course criteria and program outcomes. Unless indicated otherwise by the university authorities, the department feels that the assessment automatically aligns with the WASC accreditation standards. If required, the department is prepared to conduct student surveys focused on values imparted beyond course content alignment (taken care of as part of GE curriculum assessment) and also assess final student projects developed in the department's research and methodology seminar, AMCS 480.

The department acknowledges the difficulties in assessment because the seminar is delivered by adjunct faculty.

### **Staffing and Resources**

The department has only 3 tenure-track faculty members and is heavily burdened. Much of the course delivery is outsourced to adjunct faculty, in addition to one affiliated faculty member who also has served as the department chair. Peer departments appear to have considerably higher numbers of faculty (e.g., 5 in Chicano and Latino Studies (CALS) compared to 3 in AMCS), although the department serves a larger number of students. The AMCS faculty are the most racially diverse of any department, constituting the entirety of SSU's tenure-track and tenured Black professorship.

Although AMCS has few faculty, because of the low number of AMCS majors the advising load does not seem onerous and the Chair takes most of the advising load. However, there is a teaching load issue of four courses per semester and also low salaries that lead faculty to teach summer and winter courses. Nevertheless, faculty feel that they have enough research and travel funding that they can use to be productive scholars (within the limits of a non-research university).

Because of AB 1460 (Ethnic Studies, Area F), the program has an open hiring line that will be filled via an initial allocation of \$500K to base funding, being split among the Ethnic Studies departments in order to fulfill this legislative mandate. AMCS is waiting to make its proposal for the position until the reorganization process is more confirmed. Thus, the line will likely not be filled until Fall 2025 at the earliest. The program is also planning to examine its curriculum after the reorganization. Beyond the AMCS program, UPRS recommends that Academic Programs emphasize more holistic measures for staffing needs than the number of majors in a program, to account for the unequal burden on programs that are responsible for a disproportionate number of General Education courses but have relatively few majors. As Dr. Ezra noted: "AMCS can never hire its way out of not having majors."

### **Students**

Following the faculty deficit and overload, there appears to be increased student numbers without a corresponding increase in tenure-track/tenured faculty members. AMCS majors and graduate students were steeply rising prior to the COVID pandemic. AMCS attracts students of color and also first-generation students and has maximum diversity, with an active feeder line of students transferring from Santa Rosa Junior College.

## **Program Review Process**

The program review document is very comprehensive and demonstrates faculty engagement, particularly with the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of faculty members clearly highlighted. The report addresses core matters, e.g., assessment, graduation numbers, student issues, among others. There is also an acknowledgement of how previous program reviews have helped in refining the curriculum and attracting more students and that the faculty have a similar expectation from the current review process. In the presentation, Dr. Ezra mentioned how the department plans to address the comments of the external reviewer and Dean.

## **Commendations**

UPRS commends the program and faculty for:

- Their commitment and dedication to student learning despite their own preferences to pursue more narrow subject areas being sacrificed while at SSU.
- Their willingness to carry their responsibilities despite having to teach more sections and also during Summer and Winter to handle the low salary-high expense situation in this region.
- Adding an Asian-American studies faculty specialist to the program.
- Balancing teaching and research requirements and being productive scholars in a non-research-focused environment.
- Collaborating and cross-listing courses with other departments (e.g., Native American Studies, Women and Gender Studies, and CALS)

## **Recommendations**

UPRS suggests that the program:

- Strive toward developing a feeling of community among students in the major to help students develop a sense of connection with disciplinary peers.
- Strengthen collaboration with the School of Education to take advantage of opportunities in Ethnic Studies K-12 teaching, including developing a teaching training pathway.

UPRS also suggests that the university administration better market the AMCS program, the major, and its offerings to prospective and current students so they understand the nature of the program.

<b>Action Plan / (MOU) American Multicultural Studies (AMCS)</b>			
<b>Rec</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Planned Completion (e.g. by mid-cycle)</b>
1	<b>Develop a program assessment plan:</b> Program faculty take ownership of continuous improvement of their pedagogy and curriculum.	Faculty	By mid-cycle (Spring 2026)
2	<b>Strengthen collaboration with the School of Education:</b> Enhance cooperation to leverage opportunities in Ethnic Studies K-12 teaching, potentially developing a teaching training pathway. Consider Ethnic Studies Certificate.	Faculty & Dean	By mid-cycle
3	<b>Develop a sense of community:</b> Strive toward creating a sense of connection and community among students in the AMCS major, fostering peer connections within the discipline.	Faculty	By mid-cycle
4	<b>Improve marketing efforts:</b> Encourage the university administration to better promote the AMCS program, highlighting its major and offerings to both prospective and current students to increase awareness about the program's nature	Chair, Dean, VP for Enrollment Management	By mid-cycle
5	<b>Leverage Signature Aspects of SSU Curriculum:</b> Consider ways to expand or enhance participation in programs like the Second Year Research and Creative Experience (SYRCE) and Humanities Learning Community to recruit and retain students into the AMCS major or minor.	Faculty & Academic Programs	By mid-cycle
6	<b>Explore cross-listing options to meet GE Area F needs:</b> Other programs can help fill GE needs and alleviate pressure on AMCS.	Chair & Faculty	By mid-cycle
7	<b>Develop "University Elective" attribute:</b> Students can then more readily find electives in the course schedule rather than over-enrolling in GE.	Academic Programs & Faculty Gov	By mid-cycle

Note: Emailed to Chair Mike Ezra, Dean Laura Alamillo, Provost Karen Moranski 9/20/24