

TOPIC: PROPOSAL TO OFFER A BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ETHNIC STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER

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I. SUMMARY

This consent item recommends approval for the University of Colorado Denver (UCD) to offer a Bachelor of Arts in Ethnic Studies.

II. BACKGROUND

The following is summarized from UCD's proposal:

The Ethnic Studies program in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) currently offers a minor and certificate. The proposed program will provide students in CLAS with the opportunity to undertake a major in ethnic studies. Ethnic Studies is currently the largest minor in CLAS and the faculty necessary to support a baccalaureate degree are already in place. Most of the courses that will comprise the major are already offered within CLAS, thereby avoiding the need for additional resources.

ROLE AND MISSION SUPPORT

This degree supports the role and mission of UCD. The statutory mission states:

The Denver campus of the university of Colorado shall be an urban comprehensive undergraduate and graduate research university with selective admission standards. The Denver campus shall offer baccalaureate, master's, and a limited number of doctoral degree programs, emphasizing those that serve the needs of the Denver metropolitan area. The Denver campus has statewide authority to offer graduate programs in public administration and exclusive authority in Ethnic Studies and planning. C.R.S. 23-20-101(b)

EVIDENCE OF NEED

The number of students undertaking a minor in the program has increased greater than four and a half fold (from 24 to 110 in 2004-1011) and is currently at an all-time high. The program in ethnic studies conducted three surveys of students enrolled in ethnic studies courses during 2007 and 2010. The results of these surveys indicate that about a third (30-39%) of the students pursuing a minor in ethnic studies would pursue a major if the option were offered at CU Denver.

DUPLICATION

The CU Denver campus draws its student body primarily from Denver and the greater metropolitan area allowing its students to enroll in a program without straining work or family obligations. Degree programs in ethnic studies are offered at the University of Colorado Boulder and Colorado State University, neither of which are viable options for many CU Denver students based on the distances of these campuses from Denver.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes 23-5-129 (6)(b), department staff finds that UCD's proposed Bachelor of Arts in Ethnic Studies degree is consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the University of Colorado Denver's proposal to offer a Bachelor of Arts in Ethnic Studies.

V. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Copies of all relevant materials are on file in the Academic Affairs office and are available upon request.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. §23-5-129