Mission Statement Annual Assessment Report

Department: Race and Resistance Studies  College: College of Ethnic Studies
Department Chair: Jason Ferreira, cheo@sfsu.edu

Degree Program(s): Minor (current) / Major (in development)

Information about the purpose of mission statements and how to write them can be found on:
http://air.sfsu.edu/assessment/resources along with some links to SFSU statements.

Mission Statement Rubric – developed and used by the University Academic Assessment Advisory Committee (UAAAC) to provide feedback to programs about their mission statement.

The program’s mission statement concisely articulates its guiding purpose and identity, clarifies the educational value of its curriculum, and aligns with the university's broader public mission.

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<td>Clear statement of program’s purpose and identity, the educational value of curriculum, and its link to university’s mission</td>
<td>Mission statement articulates program's purpose but may lack broader context</td>
<td>Vague mission statement with little connection to specific program</td>
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1. What was your most recent mission statement prior to any revisions?

Prior to this moment, our mission statement was largely non-existent. It didn't speak to what we were trying to do and with whom. Instead, it arose out of our original department proposal and simply identified a range of intellectual issues that bound our curriculum together. This exercise allowed us to focus more clearly and more deeply on what we were attempting to accomplish as a unit and on what terms we were going to do it.

2. Please describe the process of revising or developing your mission statement. What informed your discussions about your new or revised mission statement (e.g. changes in the profession, new focus of the department)? How were department faculty members involved? Was it developed in department meetings or other gatherings?

We began with our proposal for the minor from many years ago. As mentioned above, it merely listed an intellectual ‘center of gravity’ for our department. Using that as a starting point, we initiated a number of conversations...first in-person and then, later, via an online format...to sharpen our mission. We have a large number of lecturers with varying levels of involvement, so most of the participants were tenure-track faculty. During the later stage of this assessment process, a departmental meeting that included all faculty focused on the finalization of the Mission Statement.

3. What is your revised mission statement?

We have a Mission and Our Commitments Statement that go together (see next page).
MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Race and Resistance Studies is to prepare students to think critically, nurture a social consciousness, actively engage with and respond to community needs, develop leadership skills, while deepening a foundation of knowledge related to the multiple histories and cultures of communities of color within and outside the United States. To do so, Race and Resistance Studies utilizes an approach that is comparative/relational, interdisciplinary, intersectional, and centered in a praxis of resistance.

OUR COMMITMENTS

RRS is committed to the study of race-related processes underlying many social problems and the forms of resistance and struggle aimed at social justice. Our program explores these processes through a comparative and relational approach-- examining how people of color and indigenous people face and resist social inequalities. We utilize a comparative framework, comparing and contrasting the distinct experiences of different racialized communities. At the same time, recognizing that communities do not exist in isolation from one another and that race itself is a mutually constitutive process, we attend to intersection, interaction, and the complexities of identity, community formation, and social struggle.

We employ interdisciplinary approaches that explore the social, economic, and political aspects of race and resistance (e.g. movements, laws, policies) along with cultural dimensions as exhibited in humanistic forms of expression (e.g. literature, media, music). This provides students with a multi-faceted understanding of the forms of oppression and struggles for change.

Our curriculum emphasizes intersectionality—the critical analysis of the ways in which existing knowledge structures such as race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality, and religion can work to erase, elide, and oppress subjects who occupy more than one position. We respect the sovereignty and distinct disciplines, methodologies, and histories of Africana Studies, American Indian Studies, Asian American Studies, and Latina/o Studies, as well as the ways in which they already address pan-ethnic, comparative, and mixed race identities and histories within their groups. Race and Resistance Studies examines how social problems are fueled by racial and ethnic discrimination by drawing from these multiple methodologies.

An integral part of our academic mission is to further develop our students’ understanding of Resistance in the context of how racist domination and power is not only reproduced but also challenged. Our degree will produce cohorts of highly motivated, critical thinkers and socially engaged students who will use their analytic frameworks to build upon existing service and organizing work among disenfranchised communities of color in the U.S. and abroad. We seek to build a praxis that unites both theory/study and practice/organizing. As such, our students have and will continue to be engaged with social movement building efforts that allow them to demonstrate their development as leaders and engage a life committed to both understanding and transforming the world on the basis of social justice.

4. Please post your revised mission statement on your department web page.

We are currently redesigning our web page. It has been posted but the webpage will not ‘go live’ until May 1st, 2018.

Given that this year you revised your mission statement, the next step would be to review of your program learning goals in the 2018-19 academic year.