

**ACADEMIC SENATE
OF
THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY**

AS-2822-07/FA (Rev)
November 8-9, 2007

**Protecting Academic Freedom for California State University (CSU)
Academic Programs, Including Area Studies**

- RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate CSU (ASCSU) strongly support the academic freedom of its faculty in proposing, developing, and implementing academic programs; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the ASCSU reaffirm that decisions affecting the curriculum and the selection of the faculty for academic programs are under the purview of campus faculty; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the ASCSU object to and deplore recent actions and attempts by political organizations and citizens' groups to bring pressure to bear on our universities and/or its programs, including Area Studies, to unduly change academic offerings and/or content; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the ASCSU encourage faculty and administration to support the integrity of all academic programs and the academic freedom of faculty teaching in these programs, including Area Studies.

RATIONALE: Consistent with constitutional protections and long-standing American Association of University Professors' (AAUP) principles, the CSU is obligated to support the faculty and the integrity of its programs, including Area Studies. In addition, a Report of the Board of Trustees' Ad Hoc Committee on Governance, Collegiality, and Responsibility in the California State University (Adopted by the Board of Trustees of the CSU on September, 1985) states in paragraph three:

*Collegial governance assigns primary responsibility to the faculty for the educational functions of the institution in accordance with basic policy as determined by the Board of Trustees. This includes admission and degree requirements, **the curriculum and methods of teaching**, academic and professional standards, and the conduct of creative and scholarly activities. [Emphasis added]*

Specifically, Area Studies, by their very nature, address social and geopolitical issues that can raise strong emotional reactions. However, in an environment that respects academic freedom and recognizes First Amendment rights, civil discourse should be encouraged and ad hominem attacks deplored.

Most recently the Middle Eastern Studies Project at CSU Fresno has come under attack based on unsubstantiated accusations against the faculty teaching in that area.

Personal political attacks on faculty have a chilling effect on freedom of teaching, inquiry and the advancement of knowledge. Such attacks undermine the campus learning and working environment and seriously damage the free flow of research and discussion.

Approved Unanimously – January 17-18, 2008