

AFT Anti-Oppression Committee Resolution on Class Size
Presented to San Mateo Community College Board of Trustees
On 11/18

Whereas, the SMCCCD has committed to identifying practices across the colleges that result in disproportionate harm for Black students and other students of color, first-generation and low-income students, students with learning differences and other students that have experienced marginalization in higher education; and

Whereas, the SMCCCD has resolved to challenge instructional practices that have disproportionate negative effects on Black students and other students of color, first-generation and low-income students, students with learning differences and other students that have experienced marginalization in higher education; and

Whereas, faculty across disciplines within the SMCCCD have developed and led professional development activities identifying the beneficial effects of student-centered pedagogical practices and the need to implement them even more broadly into our teaching; and

Whereas, there are numerous studies supporting the argument that smaller class sizes that include these student-centered pedagogical practices lead to better outcomes for Black students and other students of color, first-generation and low-income students, students with learning differences and other students that have experienced marginalization in higher education; and

Whereas, instructors must utilize an anti-racist pedagogical framework, which requires not only an overhaul to the course curriculum but also high tough student retention strategies, to alleviate the non-academic barriers to course success, including stereotype threat, microaggressions/racist abuse, previous educational trauma, and racial battle fatigue, experienced by students of color, especially our Black students; and

Whereas, we recognize that student success and meaningful learning experiences are dependent upon student-centered practices, early and regular individual contact, and qualitative assessment, but these practices take time and investment from faculty; and

Whereas, the unique stresses and challenges of the current fully online/pandemic environment further justify appropriate class size reduction, to facilitate high quality teaching and learning in the face of such unusually demanding circumstances--circumstances that disproportionately impact traditionally disadvantaged students, including Black students and other students of color, first-generation and low-income students, students with learning differences and other students that have experienced marginalization in higher education.

Be it resolved, that the AFT Anti-Oppression Committee, the AFT Executive Committee, District Academic Senate, and College of San Mateo's Educational Equity Committee ask the Board of

Trustees to support a 25% reduction in class size for all courses during the pandemic, regardless of the modality of instruction.

Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees commit to delineating and implementing a future process involving participatory governance bodies to lower class size based on social justice and equity principles in future semesters, and

Be it resolved that the SMCCCD make a concerted, systematic effort in implementing lower class sizes, not leave these decisions to individual administrator purview.

Sources

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