

**Faculty Community Networking Report 2019**  
**submitted by Indigenous scholars at UC Santa Cruz**

Vice Provost for Academic Affairs  
Professor Herbert Lee

Dear VPAA Lee:

Thank you for providing the opportunity for the Indigenous scholars at UC Santa Cruz to meet together in the Faculty Community Networking (FCN) groups. This is the first time that we have met together as a group to discuss issues of importance to Indigenous scholars on this campus. Our core group consisted of three full professors, one emeriti professor, and two assistant professors. Two other Indigenous scholars (an associate professor and an LSOE) met with us one time each and communicated with us, but one was on sabbatical and medical leave during the two quarters of our time together; the other had scheduling conflicts for our lunch dates, but met with us over dinner in April. Additionally, the Director of the American Indian Resource Center and a non-Native ally also attended one lunch each. We had an extra meeting in June attended by seven Native and non-Native scholars, and the chairman of the Amah Mutsun Tribe, who are interested in working together on a grant proposal to foster an indigenous perspective on California Missions in schools. Everyone in our group was able to meet at least once for the FCN meetings. We met together eight times, and this report is a result of those discussions. Our five-year goal is to enhance the reputation of UCSC as a place with an active Indigenous community and to create a pipeline for Indigenous scholars.

**Orientation and context**

In the 1990's there was an active UC Santa Cruz Native American (NA) staff and faculty association that gathered for social purposes. NA Faculty and graduate students, who later joined NA studies departments at other universities, organized a conference and edited a volume. This conference served to form strong and supportive academic relationships, but the group was hard to maintain as faculty separated from the university or were denied promotion, and staff members also left the university. The loss of key faculty and staff resulted in the dissolution of the group. Today, the decentralized nature of our campus physically and the siloed structure of our divisions has made it hard for our faculty to organize. Our group felt strongly about two things: (1) the importance of building a sense of community, and (2) the need to create concrete change on our campus.

**Building a sense of community**

In general, our group has a strong desire to build a more vibrant Indigenous community. We talked about creating a broad sense of community, including staff, students, postdocs, and tribal members who live in our region. We'd like to facilitate regular connections with the local Amah Mutsun members, as well as make further connections with agencies serving Native communities, such as the Tribal Assistance for Needy families.

We plan to create a dedicated website for our group, called Santa Cruz Indigenous Networking (SCIN). The website will serve as an information hub for Indigenous faculty and staff at UCSC with links of importance to our community. We also plan to hold quarterly social

gatherings (e.g., potlucks, celebrations) to strengthen our connections to each other even if the FCN funding doesn't continue. This is particularly important given that we have two assistant professors and one incoming Presidential PostDoc in our group.

Because we are such a small group (ten NA and three allies were engaged in our FCN), inter-campus connections would be highly beneficial for us. While they would be useful for all FCN groups, they are truly necessary with a group as small as ours. SCIN could facilitate connections across UC campuses.

Along these lines, our group expressed a desire to build partnerships with other communities of color on campus, with whom we share many similar experiences. We recommend more events that focus on bringing us together. For instance, we think it would be worthwhile to create an Alums of Color event alongside an alumni event for Indigenous Slugs next year. Such an event would serve to make our community more visible and also draw together a larger community. Our ultimate goal is to create a more vibrant sense of belonging, plus a pipeline for students, faculty, and staff.

### **Campus awareness of Indigenous issues and concerns**

The following are ideas for initiatives that UC Santa Cruz should consider to increase individual and collective faculty well-being, beyond an enhanced sense of community. We have identified concrete ways to influence the awareness of and sensitivity to Indigenous issues through campus, student, and faculty-oriented activities as well as activities involving the creation of a pipeline for Indigenous scholars.

**Campus and student-oriented activities.** A central discussion concerned ways to honor both the ancestral lands and Indigenous people who first inhabited this area. UCSC sits on Amah Mutsun land, and several other countries and universities (e.g., Canada - UBC, Simon Fraser; New Zealand - University of Auckland) explicitly acknowledge this type of heritage as an important part of university ceremonies (e.g., orientations, convocations, addressing the Academic Senate). Some sections of campus are beginning to address this. For instance, the 2019 Crown College Commencement program contained a land acknowledgement on the back page. A land acknowledgement recognizes the traditional territory of the Amah Mutsun people and is an act of respect. We think that this marks history in a small but significant way and should become more prevalent on campus.

We also think that signage marking Indigenous footprints, contributions and history (e.g. Pogonip means ice fog [Shoshone/Cahuilla]) would be useful. Along these lines, we talked about the El Camino bell and the missions from a Native perspective, and are pleased that the bell will be removed from campus this summer. To further honor and connect with the Amah Mutsun tribe, we discussed providing a gathering/housing space for visitors, providing gas cards and parking for visits, renaming spaces and decolonizing the lands. Perhaps the development office could help us realize some of these goals.

Developing and increasing connections among Indigenous students and allies is another important goal. We would like to advocate for an Indigenous studies minor or Designated Emphasis to highlight and bring together various courses on campus. In addition, as part of our work on the FCN, our group developed a new course, and a new course model, that we have submitted to the Chancellor's DEAR SLUG Fund. Our vision is a course where each of the

Native faculty on campus teaches a week of material, tied together with section activities. One of the unique problems Indigenous scholars face is that there aren't that many Indigenous scholars. By combining our efforts, we hope to make our presence more deeply felt on the UC Santa Cruz campus. Even if we only teach this course once, we expect long term ramifications as knowledge we share is propagated throughout our community. Learning from a range of Indigenous faculty in one course will also solidify in students' minds the key facts that we are a heterogeneous group with diverse approaches who look and think differently from each other and yet share a heritage that is often stereotyped and overlooked by the broader community. This course has the potential to be a ground-breaking model for other universities.

This course is particularly important because UC Santa Cruz does not currently offer a course that provides an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of Indigenous studies. Our course will fill this curricular void on our campus. It will serve as a gateway for students to continue their study of the Indigenous experience and help move us forward with efforts to develop an Indigenous studies major and program at UC Santa Cruz. It is critical that Indigenous faculty take a leadership role in curriculum development and programming that highlights the important interdisciplinary work happening in our community. Collaborating on the development of this course is an essential first step in realizing our long term goal of establishing an Indigenous studies program, which will garner great interest from students and the larger communities we serve.

Allies were prominent in our minds when we talked about the rise in the number of students who identify as Indigenous because of recent discoveries made through genetic testing. In addition to the course, we would like to develop an orientation targeting these students, such as a three-hour Native Orientation Social where the idea of What it Means to be Native is discussed. We plan to recruit students who identify as Natives, students who discover their Native roots through genetic testing, and allies to our GE course.

**Faculty-oriented activities.** Perhaps the most important activity the university could engage in to improve recruitment of Indigenous faculty is to begin the recruitment process sooner. Other universities start recruiting scholars early and actively court them (e.g., Stanford, Dartmouth, ASU, UNM). It's a very competitive market, and many Native scholars want to go to a place where there is an active faculty of like-minded folks. UCLA is the only UC campus with a dedicated recruiter. We advocate for our campus to talk with the people at UCLA and work out how we, too, can engage in early recruitment for scholars, and enhance overall enrollment of Native students.

Other issues for faculty include issues that cut across faculty on our campus. The high cost of housing and childcare demands disproportionately affect new faculty members, particularly single parents. Tribal members are often conflicted by the demands of both family and work, and flexible timelines and family leave policies can enhance retention.

We also discussed the need for mentoring at all levels of appointment (e.g. from assistant to full professors). We think it is important to create chains of mentorship, starting at the undergraduate level. Opportunities to share our work as "critical friends" where scholars could workshop their book manuscripts would be particularly helpful. Often, transitioning from a graduate student with advanced scholars facilitating your work to an assistant professor can be difficult. While there are more resources available now, some in our group would have

appreciated frank discussions of what it takes to get tenure, and how to deal with difficult or racist issues earlier in their career.

**K-12 educational initiative.** Being in this FNG created opportunities that may not have otherwise flourished. Three of our members are involved in the UCOP funded Critical Mission Project. Over dinner, we discussed the role that UCSC might take in this project and realized a synergistic relationship with Native faculty, the Education department and the new History & Civics Project at UC Santa Cruz, a California Subject Matter Project. The first Call for Proposals has been issued, and two of our members, Dr. Ramirez and Dr. Scott, are submitting a grant proposal as co-PIs for a \$20,000 Humanities Lab. This coalition involves Native and non-Native UC faculty in the fields of education, anthropology, history, psychology, and art history, fourth grade teachers, the History and Civics Project at UC Santa Cruz, undergraduate and graduate Native students, Amah Mutsun Research Associates, and Amah Mutsun tribal members working together to disrupt the dominant narrative regarding 4th grade mission studies, to create curricular materials, and to provide teacher professional development in the inclusion of indigenous stories. A draft of the proposal is complete, with submission on June 29th.

**Ideas for additional actions.** Other ideas for concrete action include grants to young parents for child-care money so they could attend conferences, bestowing beaded eagle feathers when our colleagues reach milestones such as tenure, and developing another conference which would bring our community together in a more formal sense. We also noted that financial resources are needed to nurture cross-system UC-wide gatherings of similar efforts.

### **Summary of Initiatives**

We present here in bullet form a summary of the concrete steps we are taking, and that we recommend UC Santa Cruz consider to improve retention of Indigenous faculty and to help Indigenous faculty build success in their academic career.

- Develop a long term plan for recruitment and retention of Indigenous faculty
  - Start the recruitment process while people are in graduate school
  - Provide adequate childcare and housing for young faculty
  - Support flexible timelines, robust family leave policies, and ways to help indigenous scholars feel like the university “has their back.”
  - Create a mentorship system that spans all phases of an academic career
  - Create mechanisms and space to continue social engagement
  
- Support campus events and activities that support the Indigenous community
  - Acknowledge Amah Mutsun at ceremonies and through signage
  - Develop a visitor house, provide gas cards/parking, and encourage Amah Mutsun active engagement on campus
  - Create a welcome event for Native students and allies

- Support development and delivery of Indigenous Slugs Present, our planned general education course that highlights Indigenous scholars
- Support events that build cohesion across groups and campuses
  - Support the creation of the SCIN website
  - Create and support both academic and social activities across minority groups on campus
  - Create and support activities across UCs
  - Support the Critical Mission project proposal

### **Our Vision**

We believe that implementation of the initiatives described in this paper will go a long way towards elevating UC Santa Cruz's stature as a campus that values Indigenous people and perspectives. The programs we hope to develop promise to have a lasting positive impact for the campus, the local community, and the state of California. We expect that, with these initiatives in place, future Native students and faculty will see our campus as a place where they will be welcome and heard. Our general education course could be a model for other campuses across our country. Our Critical Mission project could significantly impact how Indigenous history is taught locally and across our state. Our mentorship and pipeline plans could ensure retention of current students and faculty, as well as create a strong foundation for future growth.

Submitted June 23, 2019 by Judith Scott on behalf of the Native American/Indigenous Faculty Community Networking Group.

### **Addendum:**

Attached to this report are three additional documents:

1. UC Santa Cruz Faculty Community Networking Program 2018-2019 Conveners' Joint Statement
2. The proposal submitted to the Chancellor's Office for *Indigenous Slugs Present*
3. A draft proposal for a UC Santa Cruz Humanities Lab from the MRPI Critical Missions project