RE: Statement PRO diversity Requirement

Dear Senate Chair Aberbach,

I herewith submit my statement in support of the proposed diversity requirement for college undergraduates at UCLA. I’ve already voted for it once—or perhaps twice, I’ve lost count—and I still find it to be a very good idea. I will vote for it again not because I think we need to require more of our undergraduates—we do not, and in this respect I agree with those opposed who see the whole idea of general education requirements as creaky and in need of modernization. Rather I will vote for it again because I think we need to require more of our selves, our departments and our administration. As it stands we have few concrete incentives to address the climate of respect, tolerance and difference that faces everyone on our large and impressively diverse campus. Without a requirement of this sort, the same people who always teach about diversity will continue to do so—African American studies, Chicano studies, Asian American studies, Gender studies, and so forth. It is unfortunate to see such intellectual segregation, even if it exists with the bests of intentions. But with a requirement, all departments will have an incentive to take the issue seriously—and to bring their particular specialties to the presentation and critique of the issue. Diversity is a problem, a goal and a challenge for everyone—not only those who are minorities, under-represented, or simply politically aligned with a particular issue; this requirement, if adopted, signifies to me that we the faculty agree to share equal responsibility for the issue, to develop new courses and to integrate the issue into the courses we already teach, and I wholeheartedly support that.

Sincerely,

Christopher M. Kelty,
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