

March 10, 2021

Dear Friends,

Critical Ethnic Studies welcomes you to our community! We are a Humanities and Sciences program that physically sits on the land of the Ohlone and Ramatush homelands.

In 1968, The Black Student Union at San Francisco State University in partnership with The Third World Liberation Front, Latin American Students Organization, Asian American Political Alliance, Pilipino American Collegiate Endeavor, and Native American Students Union led the longest student strike in the nation's history and resulted in the establishment of a School of Ethnic Studies (now known as the College of Ethnic Studies).

In 1969, CCA(C) established the Ethnic Studies Division, which was conceived by a Black Student Union member, Baba Ochoosi Michael Wright. In the following year, this division established programs in Black Studies, Native American Studies, Chicano/a Studies, and Asian American Studies. These were the first and only Ethnic Studies-based programs situated in an arts institution in the United States, and CCA continues to be the only art school that requires undergraduates to take ethnic studies-based studio and seminar courses.

As faculty, we are dedicated to making the practices and peoples who continue to be marginalized, silenced, or rendered invisible, visible. This means we hold a commitment to engaging students in the historic, socioeconomic, and cultural issues of race and ethnicity here in the US and abroad. Our approach is built from the work of the people--our activist, creative and academic ancestors. As we celebrate 50 years and look to the next 50, we will continue to center the relational, decolonial and transnational methods that produce critical knowledge about how power, domination, privilege and inequality impact our lives and our Earth.

In a country who has yet to realize its potential, we join the broader CCA community to speak out against anti-Blackness, anti-Asian, anti Muslim, anti-Indigenous, anti-semitic, anti-trans language and violence. This includes disenfranchisement, voter suppression and all human rights violations across the world. We believe in fair and free elections, clean water, free healthcare and education for all. In our classes, we will continue to design and dream alternative visions of a liberated world where people are held accountable for their harmful words and actions and ultimately, equity is fulfilled. What are the political imaginaries we have not considered yet about how we share space on this planet? We invite you to join our community of distinguished faculty to think about this with us and see what can emerge.

Shylah Pacheco Hamilton
Chair, Critical Ethnic Studies