

Associated Students, Inc.
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo

Resolution #23-04

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A CAL POLY DISABILITY CULTURAL
PROGRAM

- WHEREAS: The ASI Board of Directors serves as the official voice of students at California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly), San Luis Obispo, and
- WHEREAS: The Cal Poly Campus Community is firmly supportive of the establishment of a disability cultural program as evidenced by a petition on the matter that has received 673 signatures as of March 19, 2023, of students, faculty, staff, and alumni expressing their voice in favor of this program¹; and
- WHEREAS: This petition also affirms sentiment from the Cal Poly Community that while the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at Cal Poly serves 8-9% of the total Cal Poly student body; factors like stigma, accessible medical care, and cost prevent many students with disabilities from registering with the DRC²; and
- WHEREAS: Students with disabilities score lower than non-disabled students on all Cal Poly Experience Study (CPX) indicators along with reporting higher rates of dissatisfaction and discrimination, according to the CPX Research Study Executive Report³; and
- WHEREAS: Disability culture emphasizes disability as an integral part of identity (like sexuality, race, gender, etc.); as such, disability culture affirms the common history shared by disabled people along with their unique individual experiences that enrich the pride and diversity of their communities⁴; and
- WHEREAS: The 6-year graduation rates for students with registered disabilities as of Fall 2020 were 6% lower than those of students without registered disabilities, according to data from the Chancellor's Office⁵; and
- WHEREAS: There are no other California State Universities with similar disability cultural programs, and there were about ten higher education institutions to have such a program as of January 2022⁶; and

1 Disability Cultural Program Proposal Support Letter: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd2ALiAzH9ULN4AWETLYLNxYRD2fak1wLsaLYV2Ry1fA-KMHA/viewform>

2 Disability Cultural Program Proposal Support Letter: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd2ALiAzH9ULN4AWETLYLNxYRD2fak1wLsaLYV2Ry1fA-KMHA/viewform>

3 2019 Cal Poly Experience (CPX) Study Executive Summary: https://content-calpoly-edu.s3.amazonaws.com/diversity/1/images/Cal_Poly_EXECSUMM_Final-2.1-compressed.pdf

4 What is Disability Culture?: <https://dsq-sds.org/article/view/343/433>

5 CSU Services for Students with Disabilities: <https://www.calstate.edu/attend/student-services/Pages/service-for-students-with-disabilities.aspx>

6 Only Ten Disability Cultural Centers Exist at U.S. Institutions: <https://www.diverseeducation.com/demographics/disabilities/article/15287582/only-ten-disability-cultural-centers-exist-at-us-institutions>

WHEREAS: Peer mentorship, self-advocacy education, and integration into the social life of the university are the two most key factors in fostering student success for students with disabilities⁷.

THEREFORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

That the establishment of a Disability Cultural Program (DCP) be proposed and adopted by the Cal Poly administration to foster student success and campus-wide DEI initiatives by promoting self-advocacy, fostering disability culture and pride, improving campus climate and experience for students with disabilities, and providing critical support to raise graduation and retention rates for students with disabilities; and

THEREFORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

That the DCP serve all students with disabilities, regardless of their registration status with the DRC, with particular attention to the diversity of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and religion of students; and

THEREFORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

That the DCP is developed within Student Diversity & Belonging to serve a larger population of the campus community while encouraging meaningful collaboration with partners across campus; and

THEREFORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

That the DCP work independently from the DRC but support its mission to maintain accommodations while offering complementary support and programming to students, staff, and faculty who are not eligible for services; and

THEREFORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

That the DCP organize social events for the purpose of forming community and support networks for disabled students and their allies; connect students to existing support groups for disabled students; and establish a peer mentoring program; and work with organizations on campus that provide academic support resources to students with disabilities such as Career Services, Advising, and the DRC; and

THEREFORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

That the DCP organize campus-wide events that educate the Cal Poly campus community on issues related to disability, with a particular focus on outreach to underrepresented minority

⁷ Disability Cultural Program Proposal Support Letter: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd2ALiAzH9ULN4AWETLYLNxYRD2fak1wLsaLYV2Ry1fA-KMHA/viewform?fbzx=8541524099295944684>

students with disabilities through offering greater support and guidance on registering for reasonable accommodations; and

THEREFORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

That the DCP work closely with other Student Diversity & Belonging (SDAB) centers and organizations on campus to serve the vast diversity of disabled students, collaborate on events with other SDAB centers for the purposes of educating the community, offering social connections, and ensuring that events are accessible to students; and

THEREFORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

That the DCP maintain a working database with instructions for how students can access the well-being resources that are available to students with disabilities at Cal Poly, partnering with those organizations and resources to ensure accessibility of services; and

THEREFORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

That the DCP work with New Students and Transition Program (NSTP) to ensure that orientation events are accessible to new and prospective students; and

THEREFORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

By establishing a Disability Cultural Program, Cal Poly would be in the unique position of being the first CSU (California State University) to launch a program with the specific purpose of promoting disability culture and identity independent of legal compliance, Cal Poly could serve as a pilot program that could eventually spread to other institutions of higher education in the state of California; and

THEREFORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

This resolution be sent to University President Jeffrey D. Armstrong; Vice President for Student Affairs Keith Humphrey; Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, Diversity and Inclusion Jamie S. Patton; and Director of the Disability Resource Center Jen Donaldson

Certified as the true and correct copy, in witness thereof, I have set my hand and Seal of the San Luis Obispo Cal Poly Associated Students, Inc. this 8th day of May 2023.

ADOPTED at the regular meeting of the Board of Directors at San Luis Obispo Cal Poly Associated Students, Inc. this 3rd day of May, 2023.

Attest: _____

ASI Secretary

Signed:

ASI Chair of the Board

Signed:

ASI President

Authored By:

- Tyler Coari, Board of Directors, College of Liberal Arts
- Cade Creason, Former ASI Chief of Staff, College of Liberal Arts
- Chau Nguyen, Student, College of Liberal Arts
- Regina Hockert, ASI Secretary of Accessibility, College of Science and Mathematics
- Sydney Lehr, President of Disability Alliance, College of Liberal Arts