



## **Associated Students of Fullerton College Resolution**

**Author(s): Grant DeVries, Kyleen Martin, Wythenia “Tina” Cruz, Erin Lacorte**

**Date Passed: 11/16/2021**

**Vote: Passed Unanimously**

**Abstract: Resolution in support of the Fullerton College Math Department considering changes to the curriculum, program, and pedagogy, to increase student success in their math courses.**

**Whereas**, Fullerton College Math Department pass rates have stayed near or below 50% for the past 10 years, leading to thousands of students failing their basic or higher-level math courses [1]. This is in contrast with a 69% course completion rate college-wide, a 19% difference [2].

**Whereas**, the density of the MATH 141 course, as an example, creates a stressful environment not conducive to student success. The course acts as a gatekeeper or barrier for many students and is not designed for student comprehension. It was the course cited most often as being a problem in the survey conducted by Associated Students.

**Whereas**, Fullerton College takes pride in being “radically student-centered,” this claim can only be substantiated if the college takes into account the voices and perspectives of students in all decisions that will affect them, specifically on math faculty hiring committees. Students are the largest constituent group at Fullerton College. The voices of more than 16,000 students should not be omitted from conversations regarding new faculty members that will affect both students’

education and futures. This change would increase the variety of teaching styles and number of hired faculty members who are representative of the communities they are teaching, something we are currently lacking. This is shown in the NOCCCD Institutional Commitment to Diversity Report released in November 2020, “At Cypress and Fullerton College combined, there is a total 51 full-time Math faculty and a total of 64 adjunct Math faculty. There are no African American full-time or adjunct faculty at either College” [5]. As stated in the Survey Inquiry Group Report, “Only 35.7% of Black students felt that they strongly mattered in classes taught by white professors compared to 78.6% of Black students in classes taught by professors of color” [4].

**Whereas**, according to a CalMatters article by Ricardo Cano, “while California's overall percentage of students deemed prepared for college or postsecondary careers has risen, there are significant gaps in preparedness for the state's most disadvantaged students.” As shown, students are not prepared to take higher-level math at the community college. We do not support forcing students to take remedial math, but there should be additional student support services and tutoring provided [3].

**Whereas**, in a survey conducted by Associated Students with 114 responses, 89% of students indicated that they would have increased success with a tutor. This is in combination with students saying tutors were more supportive than professors and fellow students. Although students report not using these services according to the Survey Inquiry Group Initial Report [4], there could be improvement in the promotion of these services and the number of embedded tutors in all math classes. As stated in the Survey Inquiry Group Report, “the campus community

could better integrate services into different spaces, including classrooms, which could help normalize seeking support” [4].

**Whereas**, there is a gap in math course success rates among non-white or Asian students and other racial or ethnic minorities. While Asian and white students have success rates of 61% and 51%, respectively, African American and Hispanic students have success rates of 31% and 36%. This is a significant difference, and while we cannot fix the inherent problems in our K-12 school system, we can try to help these disadvantaged students when they make it to the community college level [1].

**Whereas**, students do not feel supported by fellow students in their math classes. Among the 4 categories surveyed in the survey conducted by Associated Students, this was the area rated lowest, with students giving the support received by fellow students a 1.8/4. One survey respondent said: “Usually in math classes nobody talks, and everybody leaves after the class. I have been in classes where I am literally alone. And it’s usually nice to at least know someone in your class to clarify a topic, study, or just vent about the class.” This is supported by the Survey Inquiry Group’s findings that say, “42.7% of students worked with other students at least twice during class, but only 12.4% of students worked with classmates at least twice outside of class” [4].

**Whereas**, the pedagogy of many math professors does not support real-world applications or effective learning, with some professors solely posting YouTube videos and being completely absent from online classes. Without an understanding of how anything they learn actually

matters in real life, students often do not feel connected to the material. One respondent said, “If a math professor can't apply math to real-world uses, I do not have faith in their ability to understand the material well enough to teach it.”

**Therefore, be it resolved,** Associated Students demands the addition of a student representative to all math faculty hiring committees, for the betterment of the college and our education.

Students should have a voice in decisions that directly affects their education. Fullerton College should continue to follow through on its claim of being “radically student-centered” and the faculty should be representative of the people they are teaching.

**Be it further resolved,** Associated Students supports an increase in the embedded tutoring program at Fullerton College, specifically in math courses such as MATH 100, 141, and 142.

Tutors should be actively recruited from the current student population and be representative of the students. Without a change in the racial disparities of pass rates at a college level, we will continue to see a disparity at a state and national level.

**Be it further resolved,** Associated Students recommends an increase in student-to-student engagement in all math classes. Students should be encouraged to work together inside and outside of classrooms or class times to support collaborative learning and increase success. We further recommend the Math Lab reopens on a regular basis in the Spring semester to facilitate such learning.

**Be it further resolved,** Associated Students supports a review of the current math curriculum, to redefine it. The new curriculum should be chosen with student input and recommendations. We further support a review of the MATH 141 College Algebra Courses to increase course comprehension and success.

**Be it further resolved,** Associated Students encourages math professors to see things from a student's perspective and support them in their learning goals. Math professors are further encouraged to be understanding of students' lives and situations, changing to a more flexible schedule and course load. This does not mean we support making the class easier.

**Be it further resolved,** Associated Students supports the math professors who are engaging with students, promoting an active learning environment, and helping when they can. We implore the math department to see this resolution as a recommendation for change, not a condemnation of past actions. This is why we support the creation of a student and faculty (adjunct, full time, and tenured) committee to further this discussion and the creation of meaningful improvements.

**Be it finally resolved,** copies of this resolution be sent to the Office of the Vice President of Student Services, the Office of the Vice President of Administrative Services, the Office of the Vice President of Instruction, the Office of the President, the Deans Council, The Dean of the Math Department, Math Faculty Coordinator, Curriculum and Education Committee, Faculty Senate, the President's Advisory Council, and the NOCCCD Board of trustees.

Sources:

[1] Transfer Level Gateway Completion Dashboard

<https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Educational-Services-and-Support/transfer-level-dashboard>

[2] Fullerton College Institutional Effectiveness Report 2019-2020

<https://ie.fullcoll.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/27/2021/04/Fullerton-College-Institutional-Effectiveness-Report-2019-2020.pdf>

[3] CalMatters Article

<https://calmatters.org/explainers/achievement-gap-california-explainer-schools-education-disparities-explained/>

[4] Survey Inquiry Group Initial Report Final Draft

[5] Institutional Commitment to Diversity Report

[https://www.nocccd.edu/files/eo-institutional-commitment-to-diversity-report-2020-web\\_43794.pdf](https://www.nocccd.edu/files/eo-institutional-commitment-to-diversity-report-2020-web_43794.pdf)