



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON™

A Resolution in Support of the Southwest Asian North Africa Community

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Co-Sponsors: Mary Chammas, Linda (Lulu) Halisi, Seleena Mukbel, Yasmine Aboshadi, Hanin Sharif, Karimah Alomari, and Gina Waneis

WHEREAS, The Associated Students Inc., CSUF (ASI) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that operates as an auxiliary organization of California State University, Fullerton; and

WHEREAS, ASI is governed by ASI Board of Directors, sets policy for the organization, approves all funding allocations to programs and services, and advocates on behalf of student interests on committees and boards; and

WHEREAS, Southwest Asian North Africa (SWANA), traditionally known as Middle East North Africa (MENA), is a geographical term that replaces non-inclusive terms, such as “middle eastern” or “arab”, for the community; and

WHEREAS, the State of California, with Los Angeles having the largest cluster, has reported the largest number of SWANA identifying community members in the United States;¹ and

WHEREAS, the Orange County SWANA population had one of the most significant increases in population between 1990 and 2000 according to the United States Census;² and

WHEREAS, Orange and Los Angeles Counties combined account for 40% of the SWANA population in California;³ and

WHEREAS, in the United States SWANA identifying community members have been, and still currently are, being classified as “Caucasian”,⁴ and

WHEREAS, SWANA community members do not identify as “Caucasian”⁵ and the misclassification on the federal level⁶ is further perpetuating misclassifications within the California State University (CSU); and

WHEREAS, the CSU systematically collects data on race and ethnicity that does not allow proper representation for the SWANA community;⁷ and

WHEREAS, the lack of demographic data on the SWANA community hinders effective advocacy, programming, other educational resources, and opportunities for students, faculty,

¹ <https://www.arabamerica.com/california/>

² http://www.prolades.com/glama/la5co07/arab_community_in_california.htm

³ <https://www.aaiusa.org/state-profiles-detailed>

⁴ <https://www.npr.org/2018/01/29/581541111/no-middle-eastern-or-north-african-category-on-2020-census-bureau-says>

⁵ Tehranian, J. (2008). *Whitewashed: America's Invisible Middle Eastern Minority*. New York City: NYU Press. And, Arshad, Z., & Falconier, M. K. (2019). The experiences of non-Muslim, Caucasian licensed marriage and family therapists working with South Asian and Middle Eastern Muslim clients. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 41(1), 54–79. <https://doi-org.lib-proxy.fullerton.edu/10.1111/1467-6427.12203>

⁶ <https://www.npr.org/2018/01/29/581541111/no-middle-eastern-or-north-african-category-on-2020-census-bureau-says>

⁷ https://help.liaisonedu.com/Cal_State_Apply_Applicant_Help_Center/Filling_Out_Your_Cal_State_Apply_Application/Cal_State_Apply_Personal_Information/5_Race_and_Ethnicity

and staff in this community;⁸ and

WHEREAS, discrimination against SWANA community members has existed throughout U.S. history, but incidents of racism affecting the community have markedly increased since the September 11, 2001 tragedy;⁹ and

WHEREAS, two national surveys “reported alarmingly high rates of discrimination in the school and workplace among young Arab and Muslim Americans of traditional college age: 18 to 29 years”;¹⁰ and

WHEREAS, the Fullerton City Council issued a proclamation recognizing April as Arab American Heritage Month for the first time in the city’s history on April 2, 2019;¹¹ and

WHEREAS, California State University, Fullerton (CSU Fullerton) states in its Strategic Plan for 2018-2023 that it strives to create a campus of “Diversity, equity, and inclusion: We commit to our rich diversity by increasing culturally proficient and equity-minded practices across all campus communities”;¹² and

WHEREAS, the benefits of a campus with racial diversity include increased interest in promoting racial understanding and the ability to get along with other race groups;¹³ and

WHEREAS, education, celebration, and recognition lead to reduced stigma and discrimination derived from the lack of cultural knowledge and awareness;¹⁴ and

WHEREAS, human development models suggest that faculty and staff, particularly those who share the same identity as their students, can help establish surroundings where students are valued, feel safe and accepted, and have access to social networks;¹⁵ and

WHEREAS, CSU Fullerton established Diversity Initiatives and Resource Centers (DIRC) with the mission to “empower, educate, and engage students and the Titan community through co-curricular learning. We provide support for students to expand their cultural competence and identity development”;¹⁶ and

WHEREAS, out of the five currently established resource centers under DIRC, SWANA-enrolled students utilize the Asian Pacific American Resource Center (APARC); and

WHEREAS, due to the APARC coordinator position being vacant, SWANA students more recently have felt unwelcome in APARC and feel like they do not belong in the other resource centers; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, SWANA student organizations and leaders at CSU Fullerton hosted the

⁸ <https://usac.ucla.edu/documents/resolutions/UCLA%20SWANA%20Resolution.pdf>

⁹ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/49803976_A_Structural_Model_of_Racial_Discrimination_Acculturative_Stress_and_Cultural_Resources_Among_Arab_American_Adolescents. And, Amer, M. M. and Hovey, J. D. (2012) Anxiety and depression in a post-September 11 sample of Arabs in the U.S.A. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 47 : 409 – 418

¹⁰ <https://journals-sagepub-com.lib-proxy.fullerton.edu/doi/full/10.1177/1558689815599467>

¹¹ <https://aaciviccouncil.org/2019/04/05/fullerton-proclaims-april-arab-american-heritage-month/>

¹² <https://planning.fullerton.edu/2018-2023-plan/>

¹³ https://www-jstor-org.lib-proxy.fullerton.edu/stable/43654154?seq=3#metadata_info_tab_contents

¹⁴ https://www.un.org/en/events/culturaldiversityday/pdf/Investing_in_cultural_diversity.pdf

¹⁵ Allen, W. R. (1992). *Thecolorofsuccess: African American college student outcomes at predominantly white and historically black public college and universities*. *Harvard Educational Review*, 64 (1), 26-44.

¹⁶ <http://www.fullerton.edu/dirc/aboutdirc/>

first annual *SWANA Week* to celebrate the SWANA culture and heritage of students, faculty, and staff; and

WHEREAS, a majority of SWANA Week attendees strongly agreed that the programs included in the week increased their sense of belonging and sense of community at CSU Fullerton; therefore let it be

RESOLVED, that with the adoption of this resolution, ASI officially supports the SWANA community and the students' efforts to raise awareness and prioritize the issues of visibility and support; and let it be further

RESOLVED, ASI strongly encourages California State Student Association (CSSA) to advocate for all California State University applications to include Southwest Asian North African demographic options similar to the University of California applications;¹⁷ and let it be further

RESOLVED, ASI strongly recommends CSSA advocate to include the SWANA demographic options in all institutionalized data collection at the Chancellor's Office, state, and federal levels; and let it be further

RESOLVED, ASI urges that the *Titans Together: Striving for Justice, Equity and Inclusion* initiative include SWANA race and ethnicity throughout all aspects of the initiative's work; and let it be further

RESOLVED, ASI recommends Division of Academic Affairs add the demographic of "Southwest Asian North African" in race and ethnicity identification to allow students to identify with their geographical area, and optimizes reporting of the federal demographic; and let it be further

RESOLVED, ASI recommends the Division of Human Resources, Diversity and Inclusion add the demographic of "Southwest Asian North African" in race and ethnicity identification to allow employed faculty and staff to identify with their geographical area; and let it be further

RESOLVED, ASI recommends CSU Fullerton create and administer a campus climate survey with SWANA as a demographic option; and let it be further

RESOLVED, ASI recommends that Division of Student Affairs utilize aforementioned campus climate survey to address needs for space for underrepresented communities; and let it be further

RESOLVED, ASI recommends that Division of Student Affairs create a designated professional staff position to serve and support the SWANA community on campus; and let it be further

RESOLVED, ASI recommends that this professional staff member work with the Division of Student Affairs to evaluate the community's needs, and find an appropriate space for the SWANA community that promotes an inclusive and affirming environment for enrolled students; and let it be further

RESOLVED, ASI encourages the University President to officially recognize the month of April as SWANA heritage month, consistent with the heritage month recognition for other

¹⁷ <https://www.dailycal.org/2013/05/27/uc-to-introduce-new-category-for-southwest-asian-and-north-african-students-in-2013-2014-undergraduate-application/>

communities; and let it be further

RESOLVED, ASI recommends that adequate progress continues to be made on the expectations outlined in this resolution, and that the ASI President provide one status update per semester to the respective community members via presentation at the Board of Directors until no further action is required; and let it be finally

RESOLVED, that this Resolution be distributed to Chancellor Timothy P. White, California State Student Association (CSSA), all twenty-three CSU Student Governments, the California State Senator of the 29th district, the California State Assembly Member of the 65th district, and Governor of California, and to the following CSU Fullerton departments, divisions, and/or entities: the Office of the President, the President's Advisory Board, the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Office of the Vice President for Human Resources, Diversity and Inclusion, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Academic Senate, the CSUF Alumni Association, and the ASI Executive Director and applicable ASI departments for appropriate action.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Associated Students Inc., California State University, Fullerton on the twenty eighth day of April in the year two thousand and twenty.



Lorren Amelia Baker (May 5, 2020)

Lorren Amelia Baker
Chair, Board of Directors



Brittany Cook (May 7, 2020)

Brittany Cook
Treasurer/Secretary, Board of Directors