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Latin American Studies: Proposed Courses

The Latin American Studies Program has arisen out of the need of Latin peoples to have an education which is relevant to their interests and addresses itself to their needs. The Latin American people at San Francisco State College have taken upon themselves the task of developing such a program for two principal reasons: first, the state has failed to direct its educational system to meet the needs of Latin peoples--in California schools, the highest dropout rate is among Latin peoples; and secondly, for a studies program to be relevant for Latinos it must be developed and directed from the perspective of Latin American people.

Latin American Studies is essentially concentrated in two main areas:

- a) the development of an academic curriculum,
- b) and the establishment of the means and credit for Latin Americans to work with their people in the community. A principal reason for the second area is that if the program is to be real, then it must maintain a functional relationship with the community whose people it is designed to serve.

At the present time, Latin American Studies is offering four courses. Each course has been developed and is being taught by a Latin American. (None of these people are receiving salaries for this work.)

The following is a list of these courses, with a brief description of the course content:

Latin American Studies:
Courses Now Being Offered

I. Latin American People in the Bay Area.

A biweekly seminar based upon presentation by Latin American people in the Bay Area. The course will be oriented toward analysis of the economic, political, and cultural conditions in which Latin Americans live. The principal work will be focused on developing a Latin American perspective of Latin American problems, either in the United States or in Latin America.

II. Introduction to the Study of Creole.

This course is centered around two main areas. The first is to provide the students with a general sense of the background of Creole languages, their ethnic and linguistic components, and the conditions of formulation of those languages. The second part of the course will be centered around Haitian Creole. The orientation is linguistic. This also covers the phonology, morphology, partly the syntax, and the dialectic differences of Haitian Creole.

III. Native Latin American People.

The purpose of this course is to develop an appreciation for the various Indian cultures of Central and South America through the art, religion and architecture of those peoples. The course content includes the geographical location of the South American cultures, a general perspective of the various tribes in the Americas, and a concentrated study of the Mayan, Aztec, and Incan civilizations.

IV. Third World Writing Workshop.

A brief introduction dealing with the impact of nonwhite writers on their own people and on the rest of society. The principal work of the course is students learning to express themselves through the various forms of creative writing.