

**Subject:** Re: Letter to Faculty Senate regarding Thursday, October 25, 2018 Meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 30, 2018 at 5:06:27 PM Pacific Daylight Time  
**From:** Masequesmay, Gina  
**To:** Escobar, Martha D

**From:** "Escobar, Martha D" <martha.d.escobar@csun.edu>  
**Date:** Monday, October 29, 2018 at 8:26 PM  
**Subject:** Letter to Faculty Senate regarding Thursday, October 25, 2018 Meeting

Dear Faculty Senators and Campus Community,

On Thursday, October 25, 2018, the Faculty Senate decided to discuss the options presented by Dr. Mary-Pat Stein, Faculty Senate President, to implement Executive Order 1100R. As faculty in the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies, one of the departments that stands to be negatively impacted, I watched with dismay the entire process. Scholar-activist Ruth Wilson Gilmore defines racism as “the state-sanctioned or extralegal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death.” I have had to struggle for my communities’ and my right to exist since a very young age. While I am not surprised that this struggle continues at CSUN, I did not imagine that it would be this painful. What was most disturbing is watching a room full of predominantly white faculty senators decide the fate of people of color and the existence of our communities. It struck me to such extent that as I sat in the back of my chair I could physically feel myself become weighted by the heaviness of the moral decay in the senate. I did not know how else to react but to crawl inside myself and cry. That moment was very explicit in how humiliating this whole process has been. Even though faculty and students have conducted rigorous quantitative analyses by fact-finding the impact of these EO’s, we still must plead for our existence.

At the entrance to the library, students were informed that Faculty Senators and “guests” were to enter through two separate doors. How appropriate to label most of the students of color and faculty who are housed in Ethnic Studies guests because in all honesty, we have been treated as unwelcome visitors on our own campus. One colleague commented that perhaps we should designate separate entrances by race, harkening back to the good old days where “colored” was appropriately positioned in the back entrance from white people. Upon my entrance, I was confronted by several uniformed officers who guarded the doors with the threat of violence. Students were informed by police officers that they were not allowed to carry signage, an outright violation of their first amendment rights guaranteed under the Constitution, but certainly not afforded to “guests.” Only a limited number of seats were made available to students (13 to be exact) and most were turned away. Administrators were “deputized” to perform the roles of surveillance, monitoring and limiting freedom of speech—thus again criminalizing our students. An administrator and the police claimed to Kathryn Sorrells they were just enforcing the rules—not making the rules. Also, during the open session, one senator thanked the students for being “civil.” That was particularly condescending, patronizing and evoked the same old racist rhetoric we have heard throughout this process. The students remarked on this after the event. Faculty Senate President Mary Pat Stein harassed a student through intimidation by physically confronting them. One faculty senator mocked students and faculty practicing sign language to communicate about protocol. He attacked their character by stating that they were cultivating dissent without acknowledging the overt hostility against deaf communities. In light of all of this, it was evident that the existence of our departments and programs remains out of our hands.

As colleagues, I am writing to you to make a couple of requests. I am including a link (see below) to a

piece that I wrote a few years ago on my experience as an Ethnic Studies undergraduate and doctoral student and teacher, and, given that Faculty Senate is going to make decisions regarding our future, I ask that you read the piece as it provides insight into the origins of Ethnic Studies, our purpose, and why we are fighting so hard in this struggle. Both EOs impact impoverished and students of color and faculty from these departments and programs. Given this reality, I am also requesting that, if the Faculty Senate chooses one of the options to implement EO 1100R (rather than returning to the GE Task Force recommendations), the person that makes the motion include a statement that the Faculty Senate is conscious of the fact that this will negatively impact students of color, faculty of color, Ethnic Studies, Gender & Women's Studies, and Queer Studies, and thus, is operationalizing white supremacy. Even if you select the least damaging option, the upper division requirement in science is going to negatively impact our students.

Finally, I want to extend an invitation to everyone to the event, "Remembering Quinten and Resisting Violence." Quinten was a young black student at CSUN who died on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018 incarcerated in Twin Towers(see attached flyer). He was a foster youth, faced chronic houselessness, involved in a gang, was majoring in Public Health to become a nurse, and was father to his baby girl Ashanti and partner to Saharra White. The event is intended to remember Quinten and have a dialogue on how to create a world where our communities are not made vulnerable to such violence and premature death. It will take place on November 5, 2018 from 4-5:30p.m. in the USU Grand Salon. It is important to note that it is Ethnic Studies faculty and students organizing the event and calling attention to Quinten's premature death.

<https://thisbridgecalledcyberspace.net/FILES/3566.pdf>

best,

Martha

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