

El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano Plan for Higher Education (EPSB)

A brief outline

This outline/summary was created to assist presenters when presenting El Plan de Santa Barbara. Please make sure to read the El Plan before presenting. It is also recommended that you allow for discussion and a Question and Answer session during your presentation.

1. Manifesto

- When presenting El Plan de Santa Barbara (EPSB), it is recommended that you read the entire manifesto as a group. This allows for discussion.
 - Be sure to explain that EPSB was not written by Mechistas and therefore cannot be amended.
 - EPSB is used by MEChA as a guiding document.
- A. Topics in the Manifesto
- a. Chicana/o commitment: returning/working for the community
 - b. Self-Determination: for social and political action
 - c. Term “Chicana/o”: Use to be derogatory term that was re-appropriated to symbolize rebirth of pride and confidence.
 - d. Chicanismo: Man/woman is “never closer to his [her] true self as when he [she] is close to his [her] community.
 - e. Strategic use of education: Chicano Studies represents conceptualization of Chicano community’s aspirations that involve higher education. (this section is specific to California school systems, but can be used by others as a reference)
 - f. The following are detailed sections for this implementation.

2. Organizing and Instituting Chicano Programs On-campus

A. Introduction

- a. Chicana/os must have control/decision-making power on campus to implement Chicano programs
- b. University three-fold responsibility – education, research, and public service to the Chicano community
- c. Campus base (students, faculty, employees and administrators) must be developed and strengthened. Goals must be united to not jeopardize programs

B. Initial Steps

- a. Organize a Junta Directiva
- b. Research institution (structure, climate, functional operations)
- c. Secure the university’s priority to the needs of the Chicano community.

Suggestion of nine (9) principle guidelines to be observed for the creation of satisfactory and viable programs. These guidelines are expressed in general terms and it is up to the chapter to apply them to the particular context.

1. Control: Chicana/os must exercise maximum control (if applicable) over all programs initiated.
2. Autonomy: Programs at the different phases must have the maximum autonomy feasible within the context of the institution. For the programs to be effective, independence and wide latitude of operation must be assured from inception.
3. Structure: Direct communication with the highest executive must be available and in time, a general administrative position must be secured.

4. Organization: Must be designed for efficiency and unity.
5. Flexibility: flexibility must be built into the programs in order to insure sufficient latitude for a constantly increasing effectiveness.
6. Finances: Programs must have a permanent adequate proportional budgeted allocation of funds from the institution.
7. Participation and Support: Participation and support at every level and in any position must be open to all Chicana/os.
8. Staff: Must meet four qualifications, knowledge and expertise, experience, sensitivity, and a proven commitment to the goals of the program and the welfare of the community.
9. Responsibility: Integral to the Chicano Community.

C. Problem Areas

Difficulties develop from the lack of clear definitions of the roles of staff and students in the program, from the political climate, racism, etc.

D. Recommendations

Some recommendations include developing a central information bank for courses, proposals, programs, etc, design and financing of an in service and support program, priority in hiring and so on.

E. Conclusion

All program's guiding determinants must be the principles of self-determination for self-liberation.

3. Recruitment and Admissions

A. Recruitment of Chicana/o staff must take place under the following principles:

- a. The number of students qualified for the program must determine the funds for the program, versus funds available determining the number of students.
- b. Chicana/o faculty, staff and employees must be recruited at every level.
- c. Institutions must establish principles of proportional representation of Chicana/o staff according to the percentage of Chicana/o students enrolled in the university.
- d. Communities of Chicana/o students, administrators and employees must be established with the responsibility of recruiting students to do the screening process.

B. Scope of Recruitment

- Institutions should seek Chicana/o students and not wait for them to seek the university.
- Various sources should be contacted to advertise available opportunities and encourage Chicana/os to continue higher education.
- Recruitment activities must contribute to the recruitment process of Chicana/os
- Four-year institutions must help develop effective transitional programs in community colleges.
- Culturally relevant tests and indicators must be used in identifying the college potential of Chicana/os, versus standardized and grade point averages.
- Colleges and universities must also include culturally relevant criteria to hiring of Chicana/o staff, faculty, etc.
- Training programs for non-administrative Chicana/o personnel must be set up for advancing in their perspective skills.

4. Support Programs

A. Goals of Support Programs

- Focus of support programs should be to facilitate the development of educational processes to meet the unique interests of Chicana/os and develop alternative goals to those prescribed by society.
 - These programs require the development of new structures and processes. Conventional methods for support groups are not acceptable.
 - It is the Chicana/o groups and Junta Directiva's responsibility to ensure that support programs maintain a strong relevance to the specific needs of Chicana/os.
- C. Orientation Programs must deal with the following needs:
- a. Cultural Identity: activities to strengthen his cultural identity must be an integral component of every orientation.
 - b. Academic: focus on reading skills, oral expression, note taking, study skills, etc.
 - c. Achievement: redirection and reinforcement of goals.
- D. College Resources and Supportive Services
- a. Counseling: counselors should maintain close communication with students and implement classes specifically designed to keep a close communication with Chicano student advisors.
 - b. Tutor and Counseling: Should be made available on a one-to-one ratio and in-depth tutorial assistance.
 - c. Legal services: As enrollment increases, a Chicana/o lawyer should be hired to address their issues.
 - d. Chicano Veterans: Chicano ex-GI Bill
 - e. Health Facilities: Should be explained and made available to Chicana/o students
 - f. Transportation Facilities: find ways to help students plan out transportation necessities, such as work-study to pay for it, or car pools.
 - g. Job opportunities: Should be relevant to the development of the Chicano community
 - h. Career Counseling: Should be able to help students identify aspirations and potentials.
 - i. Library facilities: Should be given individual orientation sessions to help students with research and term papers.
 - j. Social needs of the Chicana/o Student: Comradeship can be found in organizations such as MEChA.
 - k. Financial assistance: Have a financial director who will work directly under the support programs.

5. Curriculum

See El Plan de Santa Barbara for outlined details.

6. Political Action

Consists of three (3) parts: political consciousness, political mobility and tactics. These must essentially influence the decision-making process of institutions that affect Chicana/os, the university, community organizations and non-community institutions.

A. Historical Perspectives

- Major factors that led to political awareness in the 60s were the clash between Anglo-American institutions and Chicana/os who maintained their cultural identity.
- Influences include: Chicano youth movements of the 30s and 40s, failures of political efforts of the 40s and 50s, the bankruptcy of Mexico-America pseudo-political associations and the disillusionment of Chicano participants in the Kennedy

campaigns, the national Farm Workers Association, the Crusade for justice, and the Alianza federal de Pueblos Libres.

- As political consciousness increased, there was a simultaneous renewal of cultural awareness which led to the creation of Chicano youth organizations, including MEChA.

B. Political Consciousness

- Commitment to the struggle for liberation is the operative definition of the ideology used here.
- Chicanismo involves a crucial distinction in political consciousness between a Mexican American and a Chicana/o mentality.
- Mexican American: lacks respect for his cultural and ethnic heritage and seeks assimilation as a way out of the “degraded” social status.
- Chicanismo reflects self-respect and pride in one’s ethnic and cultural background.
- Chicana/o acts with confidence and with a range of alternatives in the political world, capable of developing an effective ideology through action.
- Mexican Americans are potential Chicana/os.
- Chicanismo flexible to relate to varying levels of consciousness, development, composition, maturity, achievement and experience in political action.
- Cultural nationalism is a means of total Chicana/o Liberation.
- Advantages and inherent limitations to cultural nationalism.
- Chicanismo integrates self-awareness with cultural identity, a necessary step in developing cultural consciousness.

C. Political Mobilization

- As political consciousness develops, the potential for political action increases.
- Political goals must encompass the totality of Chicano interests in higher education.
- All student organizations should adopt the one identical name to characterize the common struggle of La Raza de Aztlan.
- When advantages, political coalitions with non-Chicano groups may be considered. When no longer politically advantageous, Chicano participation in coalition ends.

7. Campus Organizing: Notes on MEChA

A. Introduction

- It is the function of MEChA to further socialization and politicization for liberation on all campuses.
- We must re-define politics for our people to be a means of liberation. Political sophistication of our Raza must be raised so that they do not fall prey to apologists and vendedos.
- Spirit of MEChA must be one of “hermandad” and cultural awareness.

B. Function of MEChA – To the Student

- To socialize and politicize Chicano students on their particular campus to the ideals of the movement.
- To not overlook the human factors of friendship, understanding, trust, etc.
- To develop strengths and talents of the individual student.
- Provide the space for every MEChA person to self-criticize and re-evaluate.
- Provide fresh approaches to old problems and gives new leadership the chance to emerge.

C. Recruitment and Education

- Action is the best organizer.
- New members should be given responsibilities and made to feel part of the group.
- Understand each member's different level of awareness and use meetings to teach Chicano history and events and discuss ideology and philosophy.
- Best educational device is to be in the Barrio as much as possible, considering that most members will be products of the Barrio.
- Most members may have lost touch with the Barrio, so it is MEChA's responsibility to re-establish this connection if we are to work for La Raza.
- To develop group cohesion:
 - a. Know the talents and abilities of each member
 - b. Give every member responsibilities and recognition for effort
 - c. Mistakes should become learning experiences
 - d. Give members the chance to develop a positive self-image as a Chicana/o
 - e. Every opportunity must be seized to educate the student
 - f. Personal and human interaction must exist to create hermandad
 - g. MEChA must be learning and fulfilling experience that develops dedication and commitment
 - h. Each member must pull his/her own load and no one be allowed to be dead weight.

D. Planning and Strategy

- Actions require rudimentary organizational methods and strategy.
- The objective must be clear to the group at all times, especially during confrontations and negotiations.
- Don't be caught off guard, don't be forced to act out of haste, choose your battleground and own time schedule when possible.
- Know your powerbase and develop it.

E. The Function of MEChA – To the Campus Community

- Coalitions: Questions to keep in mind:
 - a. Is it beneficial to tie oneself to another grouping coalition which will carry one into conflicts for which one is ill-prepared or involve one with issues on which one is ill-advised?
 - b. Can one safely go into a coalition where one group is markedly stronger than another?
 - c. Are the interests of MEChA and of the community being served?
 - d. Does MEChA have an equal voice in leadership and planning in the coalition group? Is it perhaps better to enter into a loose alliance for a given issue?
 - e. How does the Leadership of each group view coalitions?
 - f. Can MEChA hold its end of the bargain?
 - It is the students who must keep after Chicana/o and non-Chicana/o administrators and faculty to see that they do not compromise the position of the student and the community.

D. Function of MEChA – Education

- a. Students must be careful not to be co-opted in their fervor for establishing relevance on the campus.

- b. The students must not become so engrossed in programs and centers created along established academic guidelines that they forget the needs of the people, which these institutions are meant to serve.
- c. The idea must be made clear to the people of the barrio that they own the schools and all their resources are at their disposal.

E. MECHA in the Barrio

- a. It is the responsibility of MEChA chapters to establish close working relationships with organizations in the surrounding Barrio.
- b. MEChA must not duplicate to efforts of another organization in the barrio, but instead accept the direction.
- c. Working in the Barrio is an honor and a right, mutual respect between the Barrio and the group must be a rule. If going only to as a cathartic experience – stay out.
- d. Of the community, for the community. Por la Raza habla el espiritu.

8. The University and the Chicano Community

- The community must have access to the university's resources.
- The university will produce knowledge for social change.
- Liberation must always be the guiding principle.
- The Chicana/o student organization will remain the key agency for aligning university resources and people to the Chicano community.
- Chicana/o students must give priority to structural change activity which aims to affect the conditions that oppress Chicano people.
- It is not enough to recruit and hire Chicana/os, they must be integrated into the Chicana/o liberation struggle.
- Our people must understand not only the importance of the university, however; they must above all perceive the university as being our university.

9. A Proposal for a Chicano Studies Program: The Santa Barbara Model

Please see El Plan de Santa Barbara for further details.