

Resolution Condemning White Supremacy and Hate Speech at CSU, Chico

Authored by Alejandro Alfaro Ramirez, Director of University Affairs, and
Guadalupe Santana, Commissioner of Diversity Affairsⁱ

Whereas; the Associated Students Government Affairs Committee is the official voice for the 17,287 students on this campus, and

Whereas; the Associated Students mission statement is “to enrich the quality of campus life at California State University, Chico and to complement the educational mission of the university providing full actualization of the university experience through student governance....,” and

Whereas; as elected student representatives, it is our duty to speak out against broad issues and individual incidents which negatively impact our historically marginalized students and their right to study and be present on campus in an environment free of violence, and

Whereas; we acknowledge and are mindful that CSU, Chico stands on lands that were originally occupied by the first people of this area, the Mechoopda, and we recognize their distinctive spiritual relationship with this land and the waters that run through campus. We are humbled that our campus resides upon sacred lands that once sustained the Mechoopda people for centuries, and

Whereas; white supremacy is defined as “a political, economic, and cultural system in which whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources, conscious and unconscious ideas of white superiority and entitlement are widespread, and relations of white dominance and non-white subordination are daily re-enacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings,”ⁱⁱ and

Whereas; white supremacy can present itself in overt and covert ways. Covert white supremacy is insidious and is not always recognized as harmful or as white supremacy; examples may include US policies and practices that are dehumanizing and violent towards historically marginalized communities, colorblindness, cultural appropriation, etc., and

Whereas; as of 2019, The Southern Poverty Law Center has recognized the following organizations as active white supremacist organizations north of Sacramento: Identity Evropa, Asatru Folk Assembly, Wolf Age, European-American Evangelistic Crusade, and the Golden State Skinheads, and

Whereas; white supremacist presence on college campuses in the US has been increasing, and in 2018 there were 319 recorded instances of white supremacist propaganda appearing on college campusesⁱⁱⁱ, and

Whereas; Chico State has seen an increase in hate motivated incidents on this campus alone, which include but are not limited to:

- February 2019, a known white supremacist was on campus whose presence in the library created fear and anxiety for Black students, and posted videos of himself harassing and using racial slurs towards students online, and
- April 2019, the 7th floor of Butte Hall was vandalized with homophobic and anti-Black hate speech which targeted Black and Queer employees^{iv}, and
- October 2019, Student Life and Leadership received a complaint that a student tabling for a recognized student organization flashed a white power hand sign at a staff member, and
- In November 2019, an “Around the World” party was organized by student on a Facebook page titled “Chico State: Class of 2020” where Chico State students wore cultural attire which mocked Latinx cultures, and displayed a Donald Trump campaign flag, and

Whereas; some marginalized students, faculty, and staff have expressed that the consistent tabling, demonstrations, and display of white supremacist/far-right propaganda by student and community groups has caused them to feel unsafe and uncomfortable, and triggers already existing trauma, and

Whereas; the presence of white supremacist ideology and hate crimes on campus has severe psychological impacts on marginalized people, and can add another barrier to their success and wellbeing^v, and

Whereas; some students, faculty, and staff from marginalized backgrounds strongly feel that the campus administration’s response to past threats of white supremacy have been subpar, and communication with the campus community about these threats has been poor, and

Whereas; historically marginalized people includes but is not limited to: Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, undocumented people, Womxn, Trans and Non-Binary people, Queer people, working class/low-income people, persons with a disability, and non-Christian religions, and

Whereas; our current definition of diversity needs to be challenged, as Dr. Wendy Leo Moore and Dr. Joyce M. Bell explain that “a central way in which color blindness gets articulated... is through the notion of diversity... diversity is acceptable in the dominant white racial frame

because it simultaneously recognizes racial difference and avoids discussions of power, privilege, and inequality^{vi},” and

Whereas; equity is preferred over “equality” because the equal treatment that is implied by “equality” ignores power differences and individual needs, promotes colorblindness, and essentially does not challenge privilege^{vii}, and

Whereas; our goals and intentions as a community and as an organization ought to practice equity by centering and prioritizing the needs historically marginalized groups, and not support the inclusion of white supremacist ideology of any form, and a public statement denouncing and discouraging white supremacy and hate speech is necessary and should aim to set this precedent across campus, thus, let it be

Resolved, that the AS Government Affairs Committee recognize the First Amendment right to free speech, but uses its own right to the First Amendment to discourage the presence of white supremacist ideology on campus, and any ideology that targets or threatens marginalized students/incites violence, through means of advocacy, public statements, and social action, and that we further support student and community grassroots organizations through different means, and be it further

Resolved; that AS Government Affairs Committee work with various campus departments to release a campus-wide notification when there are documented and confirmed incidents of white supremacist speech and propaganda on campus that lets the campus community know of the incident in a timely manner, and directly denounces it, and be it further

Resolved; upon the approval of this resolution, a statement summarizing and explaining the importance of this resolution will be written and distributed campus-wide by GAC via campus email, and the authors of this resolution will work in conjunction with University Communications to explore the various outlets to distribute this resolution/statement in order to increase public visibility, and be it further

Resolved; Chico State as a University takes responsibility in ensuring student safety and action in taking the proper precautions when incidents arise with all student entities both recognized and unrecognized on this campus

Resolved; that the Office of the President is strongly encouraged to release a separate statement explicitly denouncing white supremacy, or release a statement endorsing this resolution, and be it further

Resolved; that it be encouraged that this resolution be endorsed by the Academic Senate at CSU, Chico, and be it further

Resolved; that this resolution be distributed to the Office of the President, Office of the Provost, Office of Student Affairs, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, University Diversity Council, Campus Climate Committee, CSU, Chico Academic Senate, and the CSU Office of the Chancellor.

ⁱ Original framework was authored by Leen Almahdi and Thulani Ngazimbi, who were both ASI elected representatives at CSU, Long Beach

ⁱⁱ Ansley, F. L. (1997) <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1468796806068323>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/03/06/analysis-finds-increase-white-supremacist-propaganda-college-campuses>

^{iv} <https://www.actionnewsnow.com/content/news/University-police-investigating-hate-crime-reported-at-Chico-508332631.html>

^v McDEVITT, JACK, et al. "Consequences for Victims: A Comparison of Bias- and Non-Bias-Motivated Assaults." *American Behavioral Scientist*, vol. 45, no. 4, Dec. 2001, pp. 697–713, doi:10.1177/0002764201045004010.

^{vi} Bell, J., & Leo Moore, W. (2010). Embodying The White Racial Frame: The (In)Significance of Barack Obama. *Journal of Race and Policy*, 6(1), 123-138.

^{vii} <https://everydayfeminism.com/2014/09/equality-is-not-enough/>