

Presidential Fellows Report

Asian American & Pacific Islander Student Success

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Asian American, Asian & Pacific Islander

Employee Resource Group

Portland State University

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Located in the heart of downtown Portland, Oregon in Multnomah county, PSU stands on the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Multnomah, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Tumwater, Watlala bands of the Chinook, the Tualatin Kalapuya, and many other Indigenous nations of the Columbia River. It is our responsibility as settlers on this land to honor and recognize that we are only here as a result of the forced sacrifices, continued colonization, systemic violence, and strategic displacement of the original and rightful stewards of these lands. In honoring the lives that have been lost and the intergenerational impacts of this violence, we must also give thanks to the descendants of these Indigenous/Native tribes who continue to carry on their communities legacy of resistance, survivance, creativity and brilliance. Land acknowledgements are empty without action behind it. Therefore, we should shift to a frame of Land Back. This includes, but is not restricted to, revitalization of Indigenous knowledges, giving to Native organizations, donating to the Indigenous communities whose land you reside on, building relationships with the people and their hxstory, and more. Be generous, not only monetarily, but with talents and time as well. Make space and redistribute power. Thank you.



AAPI ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The lack of visibility and representation of AAPIs has become particularly urgent during the COVID-19 pandemic. In some states, disproportionate mortality rates have been recorded for Asian Americans while the burden of death due to COVID-19 is unknown in areas (e.g., Florida, South Carolina) where Asians are classified as “Other” (Wang et al., 2020). In Oregon, Pacific Islanders are hospitalized at a rate that is much higher than their population share and they have the highest age-adjusted COVID-19 mortality rates (Oregon Health Authority, 2021). Some AAPI subgroups may be at higher risk for COVID-19 morbidity and mortality due to their increased occupational exposure, high rates of intergenerational co-residence, low socioeconomic status, lack of health insurance, and limited language proficiency (Wang et al., 2020). Former President Trump’s overtly Sinophobic labeling of COVID-19 as the “Chinese virus” and the “Kung Flu” has also fueled a surge in discrimination and violence towards AAPIs and reinforced the longstanding negative stereotype of Asian Americans as the “Yellow Peril.” The racial discrimination and anti-Asian hate crimes associated with the COVID-19 pandemic will undoubtedly have long lasting and negative impacts on the health of AAPIs.

API ERG UPDATES



TODAY'S AGENDA

Overview of 2020 Presidential Fellowship
Presentation
Q + A
Brainstorm Session
Closing



2020 Presidential Fellowship

- Spring 2020: Meeting to discuss appointing two Presidential Fellows
- Fall 2020: Betty and Bree started the fellowship
 - Reviewed institutional documents
 - Conducted interviews with current/former AAPI faculty/staff
 - Facilitated two listening sessions with current AAPI faculty/staff
 - Met with PSU staff, including senior-level administrators
 - Met with President Percy and VP Lambert
- Winter 2021: Submitted 2021 Presidential Fellows Report

Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs)

- Fastest growing populations in the US and Oregon
- Heterogeneous group (ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, language, immigration status, migration and colonization histories, etc).
- Model minority myth and lack of data erase heterogeneity of AAPIs and invisibilizes their challenges, struggles, and experiences with racism



AAPIs in Oregon, Portland Metro Area and PSU

- 7.7% Oregon
- 9.8% Portland Metro Area
- 13.1% students
- 10.5% faculty
- 11.8% academic professionals



Action 1: Establish an AAPI Studies Program in the School of Gender, Race and Nations by Fall 2022

- Asian American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies are distinct fields of inquiry that focus on unique experiences of AAPIs
- Absence of AAPI Studies in SGRN ignores and minimizes challenges, struggles, contributions of AAPIs
- During 2020-2021 AY, only 2 courses in Asian American Studies, 0 in Pacific Islander Studies

Update 1: Establish an AAPI Studies Program in the School of Gender, Race and Nations by Fall 2022

- Fall 2020: AAPI Studies workgroup formed
 - Betty Izumi, School of Public Health
 - Marie Lo, English Department
 - Sri Craven, WGSS Department
 - Kai Hang Cheang, WGSS Department
 - Alma Trinidad, School of Social Work
 - Lisa Weasel, WGSS Department
 - Bree Kalima, PIAAA Student Center
 - Motutama Sipelii, Student
 - Ava Kupperman, Student

Update 1 cont'd: Establish an AAPI Studies Program in the School of Gender, Race and Nations by Fall 2022

- Met bimonthly to identify existing resources that could be leveraged and new resource required
- Met with SGRN units, SGRN Director Van Alst, CLAS Dean Rosenstiel, Provost Jeffords, Catherine Ingvaldsen (PSU Foundation), Sho Dozono (PSU Board of Directors), Enrollment Management, others
- Received \$25,000 in seed funds from Global Diversity and Inclusion to support initiative
- Submitted grant to Antiracist SPH initiative to develop courses, a strategic plan for establishing AAPI Studies, and host in-person/virtual events
- Collaborating with PIAAA Student Center to host event to discuss a future AAPI Studies program

Update 1 cont'd: Establish an AAPI Studies Program in the School of Gender, Race and Nations by Fall 2022

- Explored applying for AANAPISI designation; 9.7% AANAPI enrollment
- Strong sign-on letter in support of AAPI Studies to President Percy, Provost Jeffords, Vice President Lambert

Action 2: Collect disaggregated and nuanced data to better understand the experiences and challenges faced by AAPI students at Portland State

- Aggregated data obscures differences in educational experiences and outcomes between AAPI sub-groups
- Pacific Islander students have among the lowest retention and graduation rates of all full-time students; 13-14% equity gap in graduation rates
- Asian American students have higher retention and graduation rates; 33-36% students are not retained
- Asian American students report more academic challenges and feel less welcome at PSU than peers and have greater personal challenges

Update 2: Collect disaggregated and nuanced data to better understand the experiences and challenges faced by AAPI students at Portland State

- Julie Caron, Title IX Coordinator, formed a demographic data workgroup to identify subgroups for the Asian and Pacific Islander categories
- Considering Oregon Health Authority categories:
 - Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander
 - Chamoru (Chamorro)
 - Marshallese
 - Communities of the Micronesian Region
 - Native Hawaiian
 - Samoan
 - Other Pacific Islander
 - Asian
 - Asian Indian
 - Cambodian
 - Communities of Myanmar
 - Filipino/a
 - Hmong
 - Japanese
 - Korean
 - Laotian
 - South Asian
 - Vietnamese
 - Other Asian

Update 2: Collect disaggregated and nuanced data to better understand the experiences and challenges faced by AAPI students at Portland State

- Motu Sipelii and Ava Kupperman submitted a Diversity Award application to study the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on AAPI students
- Three questions added to Student Experience Survey
 - As a result of the pandemic, have you experienced any discriminatory or hostile behavior due to your race/ethnicity? Yes/No
 - As a result of the pandemic, have you witnessed any discriminatory or hostile behavior towards others due to their race/ethnicity? Yes/No
 - How supportive have the following groups been for you during the COVID-19 pandemic?
 - College/university administration
 - Your professors
 - Campus mental health services
 - Campus medical services
 - Cultural resource centers

Action 3: Establish policies and practices to retain, recognize, and reward AAPI faculty and staff whose efforts help to enable the University to deliver on its access mission

- Imbalance between AAPI students, faculty, academic professionals, administrators; only 6.4% of senior-level positions held by AAPIs
- AAPI faculty and staff reported experiencing racial microaggressions and overt discrimination and feeling isolated, invisible and burnt out
- AAPI faculty and staff take on above-level service work; Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is encouraging
- Formal mentoring and leadership development, compensation for Affinity Group & Employee Resource Group co-chairs, updated job descriptions for staff, training for employees about model minority myth recommended

Update 3: Establish policies and practices to retain, recognize, and reward AAPI faculty and staff whose efforts help to enable the University to deliver on its access mission

- Faculty Senate appointed Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for PSU Promotion and Tenure Guidelines



Questions?





Next Steps

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT:

- Sign on to the letter
- Share the report
- Attend API Heritage Month events
- **FOR US, BY US: Exploring AAPI Studies at PSU**
 - Monday, May 3, 5-7PM PST
 - Look out for a calendar invite

WHAT WE NEED HELP WITH:

- Advocacy to demographic data workgroup