

Resolution on Political Speech,
Prepared for 2012 MLA annual Convention

The sources are hyperlinked for electronic access. Most articles are abridged for space.

Rationale:

This resolution is intended to primarily address the difficulty of effective participation in institutional governance by students and contingent faculty members, especially in relation to their efforts to

- 1) speak out against program discontinuance.
- 2) point out the disproportionate effect of budgetary decisions on groups not well integrated into internal governance processes, such as PTF
- 3) defend programs under attack for unexamined or unacknowledged political reasons, such as Ethnic studies or Labor studies, and Environmental studies
- 4) object to the restriction of access to higher education for poor or minority students via excessive tuition spikes and apportionment restrictions, or
- 5) involve themselves in social justice movements inside and outside the academy.

Because the class of protected faculty members, those with tenure, grows smaller every year, it is important for MLA to extend such protection as it can, via a resolution of principle, to the

- 1) less well protected faculty members,
- 2) the particularly vulnerable students-- that constitute the reason we teach in the first place, and
- 3) international literary figures that are central to the study of world literature and who are under attack or facing reprisals for their political speech.

We have included a case from a border university (Canada-McGill) and from 2010 (Berkeley Hunger Strike related to Ethnic Studies) as we want to stress the wide geographic reach, and acknowledge the roots of these attacks on programs in previous years.

The Resolution:

RESOLUTION on Political Speech (96 WORDS)

Whereas the study of language and literature entails investigation of local and international context,

Whereas faculty members, students, and writers of interest to the academy face institutional sanctions for arguing against economic and political threats to higher education and for supporting social justice movements inside and outside the academy,

Resolved that MLA affirm the right of academic communities to challenge or criticize legislative or administrative decisions curtailing educational access, oppose political interference in such allied academic areas as ethnic and environmental studies, and address social justice issues of relevance to their communities without fear of reprisal.

Submitted by Margaret Hanzimanolis for the Radical Caucus. (Margaret Hanzimanolis, De Anza College, Cupertino, CA and Cañada College, Redwood City, CA hanzimanolsmargaret@fhda.edu or hanzimanolis@gmail.com)

Supporting Documents tied to specific resolution clauses:

I. Whereas the study of language and literature entails investigation of local and international context.

Language: Claire J. Kramsch's *Context and Culture in Language Teaching* (1993) and many other full length books and articles have established the importance of culture and context to the teaching of languages.

Literature: 228,000 distinct citations have been catalogued since 2000 on the subject of literature and context. For literature that does not arise out of or represent dominant culture, such as African-American literature, feminist literature, native-American literature, Latino/latina literature, and Asian-American literature, the study of political and social context is especially important. [http://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&q=literary+studies++and+context&btnG=Search&as_sdt=0%2C5&as_ylo=2000&as_vis=0h]

II. Whereas faculty members*, students, and writers of interest to the academy*** face institutional sanctions for arguing against economic and political threats to higher education and for supporting social justice movements inside and outside the academy****,**

*July 4, 2010

1) Tenure, RIP: What the Vanishing Status Means for the Future of Education Chronicle of Higher Education (abridged)

By Robin Wilson

Some time this fall, the U.S. Education Department will publish a report that documents the death of tenure. Innocuously titled "Employees in Postsecondary Institutions, Fall 2009," the report won't say it's about the demise of tenure. But that's what it will show.

Over just three decades, the proportion of college instructors who are tenured or on the tenure track plummeted: from 57 percent in 1975 to 31 percent in 2007. The new report is expected to show that that proportion fell below 30 percent in 2009. If you add graduate teaching assistants to the mix, those with some kind of tenure status represent a mere quarter of all instructors. The idea that tenure, a defining feature of U.S. higher education throughout the 20th century, has shrunk so drastically is shocking. But, says Stanley N. Katz, director of Princeton University's Center for Arts and Cultural Policy Studies, "we may be approaching a situation in which there will not be good, tenure-track jobs for the great majority of good people."

What does vanishing tenure mean for higher education? For starters, some observers say that college faculties are being filled with people who may be less willing to speak their minds: contingent instructors, usually working on short-term contracts. Indeed, the American Association of University Professors says instructors need tenure to guarantee that they can say controversial things inside and outside the classroom without being fired.

2) <http://thefire.org/article/13482.html>

NEW YORK, August 22, 2011—Last week, after twice confining faculty members protesting budget cuts behind metal barricades, Nassau Community College (NCC) on Long Island reversed itself and allowed its instructors to freely distribute literature and carry protest signs across campus. Faculty members subjected to these unconstitutional "free speech zones" came to the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) for help.

"NCC was treating faculty members like potential rioters," FIRE Senior Vice President Robert Shibley said. "This was a classic case of unconstitutional restraint on free speech." A week before a rally on NCC's main plaza by members of the Nassau Community College Federation of Teachers (NCCFT), faculty member Ralph Nazareth informed NCC's Public Safety Office of the group's intent to protest against campus budget cuts. When Nazareth and other protesters arrived at the site for the protest on July 20, 2011, they found metal barricades awaiting them. Director of Public Safety Martin J. Roddini handed Nazareth a [notice](#) ordering the faculty members to stay behind the barricades. The notice stated that "Any person leaving the designated area with the intent to protest will be warned that he/she must return to the enclosed area" and that "If that person persists, his/her right to remain on the campus may be forfeited." Bizarrely, the faculty members reported that they also were prohibited from distributing flyers at the rally because the flyers had not been pre-approved by NCC's student government. When NCCFT members held a [second protest](#) on August 3, NCC again forced the protesters behind barricades.

** Students are standing up the the cuts that affect their future much more than faculty. We need to support their efforts

1) [SEVEN Undocumented Students Arrested In Demonstration At Georgia State](#)

- April 6, 2011 (summarized from an article By [Jeremy Redmon](#) in The Atlanta Journal-Constitution (April 5, 2011))

[Seven students were arrested](#) yesterday at a demonstration against a ban on the admission of undocumented students to some state universities in Georgia. All of those arrested [are reportedly undocumented](#) themselves, and they may face deportation as a result of their protest.

The arrests came at the end of a rally and march that drew more than a hundred people in support of the DREAM Act and in opposition to a ban on admission of undocumented students to University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, Georgia State, Georgia College & State University and the Medical College of Georgia. The students called upon GSU president Mark Becker to refuse to comply with the ban, which was [implemented by the state board of regents last fall](#).

Only five of the nearly forty state colleges and universities in Georgia are covered by the ban, but new regulations require all public colleges and universities in the state to determine students' residency status. Undocumented students in the state are charged out-of-state tuition, however long they have lived in Georgia.

2) Nine Activists Arrested at OSU Sodexo Protest (summary of article in *The Lantern*, Campus Newspaper, Ohio State University, May 23, 2011, written by Gorden Grafft)

May 24, 2011

Nine activists, seven of them students, were [arrested at Ohio State University](#) yesterday afternoon at the offices of university president Gordon Gee. The nine were part of a group of more than a hundred who had gathered [to protest OSU's relationship with campus contractor Sodexo](#).

The activists were affiliated with the OSU chapter of [United Students Against Sweatshops](#), a national organization whose members have mounted nearly a dozen major campus protests across the country in recent weeks. USAS was spurred to action by reports of Sodexo worker rights abuses in at least five countries, as well as reports of mistreatment by Sodexo workers at OSU's own sports stadium.

Western Washington University last week broke ties with Sodexo in the face of a USAS-led campaign, while administrators at Emory and the University of Washington have arrested students peacefully protesting against the company.

3) McGill Demonstrators barred from Senate (abridged)

Sept 26, 2011

QUEEN ARSEM-O'MALLEY

The McGill Senate held its first meeting of the year last Thursday, while nearly thirty students held a demonstration in support of the McGill University Non-Academic Certified Association (MUNACA) outside the room. The students marched from the Roddick Gates to the Leacock Building, where the meeting was held. Before the march to Leacock, Claire Stewart-Kanigan, U1 Political Science, explained her attendance at the event. "This is an institution for the students," Stewart-Kanigan said. "If the students themselves don't approve of the administration then I think it sends a clear message to the administration that something needs to be done."

Security initially blocked entry to the group as they attempted to enter the building, after which students found an alternate entrance. Once inside, guards allowed few spectators to enter the room, and told the majority of protesters that they would not be let in due to their potential disruption of the meeting. . . . Students sat outside of the meeting for an hour and half, Over the course of the discussion, multiple Senators expressed gratification that the administration had admitted that the University is not business as usual. SSMU VP University Affairs Emily Yee Clare, a student Senator, brought forth a question regarding the effects of the labour dispute on student services, and asked what the administration is doing to consider the needs of students in their decision-making process. **The question asked how students can achieve full potential "in light of critically reduced access to vital services."**

4) McGill takes hard line on off-campus classes during strike

BY KAREN SEIDMAN, GAZETTE UNIVERSITIES REPORTER SEPTEMBER 21, 2011

Striking members of the McGill University Non-Academic Certified Association are joined by students and professors at a rally last week.

Photograph by: John Mahoney, The Gazette

MONTREAL - When is teaching not teaching?

When it's done off-campus, according to McGill University officials, who sent a message to academics on Tuesday making it clear classes can't be moved off-campus because professors want to avoid crossing the picket lines of striking support staff.

McGill's position, as outlined by Provost Anthony Masi in a letter to staff, says "staff members must be available to carry out their duties at the university during the academic year."

The letter is in response to Prof. Michelle Hartman's decision to move her Islamic studies class to her living room to avoid the picket lines at the downtown campus.

Hartman thought she was showing her 22 students you can take a stand and still do your job. She felt it was the perfect balance between her obligation to show solidarity with other employees and her obligation to teach.

McGill did not agree. Hartman said she was told by Christopher Manfredi, the dean of arts, to move her class back on campus or she would lose her salary.

"He said you can't do your job properly if you're not on campus," Hartman told The Gazette. "I told him I'm moving it back under protest. "That was the most inflexible and disingenuous interpretation of the rules I've heard."

Support staff belonging to the McGill University Non-Academic Certified Association have been striking since the fall semester began. Meetings with a conciliator are to continue Wednesday. The striking workers have created a noisy, tense campus, chanting and beating drums at some of the university's busiest areas like the Roddick Gates. Hartman said a handful of professors are holding classes in cafés or in their homes, and no one else has been reprimanded. "The role of a professor is not 40 hours a week at a desk," she said. "I find their interpretation really problematic." In a statement, Manfredi said his office had received complaints from students who found the off-campus classes inconvenient. Masi's letter said: "A professor's right not to cross a picket line does not confer any right to move classes away from campus." He said the university has an obligation to deliver classes in a location that is least disruptive for students.

"There is also an issue with insurance and liability," added Michael Di Grappa, viceprincipal of administration and finance for McGill. Another arts professor who has been holding her small graduate classes off-campus to support the strike complained "authoritarianism" has gripped the university. "I've always taught students at my home," said the professor, who didn't want to be named. "It's normal practice for many of us." She said her students have told her they were relieved to not have to cross the picket line. "I think the university doesn't like it that solidarity is building for the strikers among students and faculty," she said. "Off-campus classes are no different than taking students on field trips, which we do all the time. The university is just trying

to create a climate of fear and paranoia."

4) A Letter to the UC Berkeley Community Concerning Ongoing Prosecutions of Student Activists (abridged) February 17, 2010

We're writing to let you know about some disturbing actions the Office of Student Conduct at UC Berkeley has recently taken in prosecuting approximately one hundred student activists, including ourselves. Those facing prosecutions are alleged to have participated in at least one of three non-violent actions that occurred on campus last fall, including the reclamation of Wheeler Hall on November 20th. For our participation in this event, we are being charged with violating a number of regulations from the University Code of Conduct, the most serious being 321c, Physical Abuse. This regulation reads in full:

"No person on University property or at official University functions may engage in physical abuse including but not limited to sexual assault, sex offenses, and other physical assault; threats of violence; or other conduct that threatens the health or safety of any person."

When asked by our law student representatives, the conduct officers assigned to our cases did not produce or identify any evidence to justify this charge. Far from engaging in physical abuse on the 20th, those of us inside Wheeler Hall explicitly and repeatedly identified ourselves to the police as non-violent, and, when the police began to succeed at unhinging the doors, we made a point to move away from the doors, sit down together in a classroom, and raise our hands in the air, so as not to be misconstrued as presenting any physical threat to the officers.

Moreover, when in the morning of November 20th we prepared to secure the doors of Wheeler Hall, we traveled throughout the entire building and made sure that it was empty, so that no one would be locked inside with us. During this process, a few of us on the ground floor were spotted by police officers. The officers entered the building through a window, made two arrests and hit a nonviolent student protester with a baton as he fled back to the second floor, where the rest of us were located. The red welt on the student's back was the first indication to those of us inside the building of the physical danger we would face that day. Subsequently, we were threatened verbally by the police, who told us through the doors to "get ready for the beat-down," and we received via electronic communication descriptions and images of student protesters outside Wheeler Hall having their bones broken, being hit with batons, and being shot with rubber bullets by the police. Given this experience, it is difficult for us to understand why we students, rather than the officers who engaged in excessive force, or who threatened students with violence, are facing prosecution for violating section 321c of the University Code of Conduct – the section on physical abuse.

The Office of Student Conduct (OSC) is targeting student activists with arbitrary and inflated

charges. And, based on our experiences so far, the OSC apparently does not consider their disciplinary process to be subject to the parameters imposed on a public institution by federal and state law. Our legal representatives have repeatedly observed in preliminary hearings irregular and legally questionable practices concerning the presentation of evidence, the right to representation, the right to remain silent, and other basic judicial principles. We are participating in the Student Conduct hearings in a straightforward and respectful manner, but are concerned that we are falling into an extra-legal morass with no just end in sight.

Sincerely,

Amanda Armstrong

Graduate Student, Department of Rhetoric

Zachary Levenson

Graduate Student, Department of Sociology

Paul Nadal

Graduate Student, Department of Rhetoric

5)

<http://www.berkeleydailyplanet.com/issue/2011-09-23/article/38448?headline=Fall-Budget-and-Fee-Protests-Begin-at-UC-Berkeley>

Student, staff, and community demonstrators kicked off a fall season of budget cut and fee increase protest at the UC Berkeley campus on **Thursday, September 22, 2011**, with a modest but spirited noontime rally, followed by a march through campus and occupation of classrooms.

At day's end some of the group was gathered, watched by campus police, in part of Tolman Hall, the sprawling Education / Psychology building in the northwest corner of the campus along Hearst Avenue.

I watched part of the Sproul Plaza demonstration and march that fell during my lunch hour. An array of speakers focused on placing the campus protests in the context of national efforts to stop budget cuts, protect labor rights, and reverse growing economic inequality in the United States.

I arrived when Professor of Geography Dick Walker was speaking. "This is not a pay for play institution", he told the crowd. "It is a public institution."

"If high administrators and high faculty don't think their salaries are good enough, let them go somewhere else", he said, drawing some of the loudest applause of the mid-day. "We have to restore our public purpose."

"This is a political question. It is not going to be solved by a technical fix. It 's not going to be solved by a political fix."

"You are absolutely the moral compass of this institution", he told the crowd, that appeared to be largely students. "It's always been the students who have led the way. You have to do it again."

"Defend the great idea of public education", Walker concluded.

*** (Writers of interest to the academy) [Arundhati Roy: 'They are trying to keep me destabilised. Anybody who says anything is in danger'](#) (abridged) (Guardian) (June 5, 2011)

Stephen Moss

Roy, who is 50 this year, is best known for her 1997 Booker prize-winning novel [The God of Small Things](#), but for the past decade has been an increasingly vocal critic of the Indian state, attacking its policy towards Kashmir, the environmental destruction wrought by rapid development, the country's nuclear weapons programme and corruption. As a prominent opponent of everything connected with globalisation, she is seeking to construct a "new modernity" based on sustainability and a defence of traditional ways of life.

Her new book, *Broken Republic*, brings together three essays about the Maoist guerrilla movement in the forests of central India that is resisting the government's attempts to develop and mine land on which tribal people live. . . . There is intense anger in the book, I say, implying that if she toned it down she might find a readier audience. "The anger is calibrated," she insists. "It's less than I actually feel." But even so, her critics call her shrill. "That word 'shrill' is reserved for any expression of feeling. It's all right for the establishment to be as shrill as it likes about annihilating people."

. . . Her critics label her a Maoist sympathiser. Is she? "I am a Maoist sympathiser," she says. "I'm not a Maoist ideologue, because the communist movements in history have been just as destructive as capitalism. But right now, when the assault is on, I feel they are very much part of the resistance that I support."

Roy talks about the resistance as an "insurrection"; she makes India sound as if it's ripe for a Chinese or Russian-style revolution. So how come we in the west don't hear about these mini-wars? "I have been told quite openly by several correspondents of international newspapers," she says, "that they have instructions – 'No negative news from India' – because it's an investment destination. So you don't hear about it. . . ."

I question her absolutism, her Manichaeic view of the world, but I admire her courage. Her home has been pelted with stones; the Indian launch of *Broken Republic* was interrupted by pro-government demonstrators who stormed the stage; she may be charged with sedition for saying that Kashmiris should be given the right of self-determination. "They are trying to keep me destabilised," she says. Does she feel threatened? "Anybody who says anything is in danger. Hundreds of people are in jail."

Roy has likened writing fiction and polemic to the difference between dancing and walking. Does she not want to dance again? "Of course I do." Is she working on a new novel? "I have been," she says with a laugh, "but I don't get much time to do it." Does it bother her that the followup to *The God of Small Things* has been so long in coming? "I'm a highly unambitious person," she says. "What does it matter if there is or isn't a novel? I really don't look at it that way. For me, nothing would have been worth not going into that forest."

III. Resolved that MLA affirm the right of academic communities to challenge or criticize legislative or administrative decisions curtailing educational access, oppose political interference in such allied academic areas **as ethnic* and environmental studies*, and address social justice issues of relevance to their communities without fear of reprisal.**

* **Unprecedented** enrollment reductions are occurring all over the country. This contraction of accessibility to colleges and universities will have devastating and long-lasting effects on an entire generation of mostly low-income and minority students. In California, these enrollment contractions for state students are accompanied by aggressive international recruitment programs, meant to bolster tuition revenue because of state revenue cuts. Here is just one state:

1) [Facing New Cuts, California's Colleges Are Shrinking Their Enrollments](#)

Gov. Jerry Brown of California released a budget proposal on Monday that would trim \$1.4-billion from the state's public colleges, making further enrollment drops likely.

By Josh Keller

January 13, 2011

San Francisco

The **\$1.4-billion in budget cuts** proposed this week for California's public colleges could prompt a new year of protests that decry higher tuition, stagnant employee salaries, and the growing inability of Californians to afford college. But as a barrier to student access, rising tuition may ultimately pale in comparison with a more fundamental shift: The state's colleges have started to shrink.

California's public-college enrollment declined by 165,000 during the past academic year, even as the number of people trying to get into college grew. Community colleges accounted for most of the decline, the largest in a single year since 1993.

The combination of a growing college-age population and a reduced budget has turned what was once a model for college access into a much scarcer commodity. California State University at Long Beach, which has lost more students than most colleges, enrolled only 9 percent of applicants last fall, a lower rate than at the University of California at Berkeley and the University of Virginia, and only slightly higher than at Dartmouth College. The cuts that Gov. Jerry Brown, a newly elected Democrat, has proposed would ensure that the nation's largest set of public colleges—comprising three systems—would continue downsizing well into 2012.

The campuses in the Cal State system, which had planned to grow this fall, may reverse course and cut undergraduate enrollment for the second time in two years. The University of California, which has managed to hold its numbers fairly steady, will begin to consider major enrollment

cuts for 2012 at a Board of Regents meeting this month. "The physics of the situation cannot be denied—as the core budget shrinks, so must the university," Mark G. Yudof, president of the University of California, wrote in response to the governor's plan.

Where California's Transfer Students Ended Up							
Far fewer community-college students were able to transfer to California State University campuses last year because of budget cuts. As the capacity of public universities has stagnated, the number of Californians who transfer to private colleges has grown.							
	200 3-4	200 4-5	200 5-6	200 6-7	200 7-8	200 8-9	200 9-10
California State U.	48,3 21	53,6 95	52,6 41	54,3 91	54,9 71	49,7 70	37,6 47
U. of California	12,5 39	13,1 14	13,5 10	13,8 71	13,9 09	14,0 59	14,7 02
Private nonprofit colleges	20,1 10	20,9 77	20,9 58	20,2 77	21,7 74	22,3 66	*
Private for-profit colleges	10,4 73	11,2 48	11,0 04	11,9 90	14,2 01	13,3 88	*
* Private-college data for 2009-10 are not yet available.							
Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office							

Mr. Brown's budget is only a proposal, of course, and unhappy lawmakers from both parties will try to change it. But few college officials believe that the situation will improve in the coming months.

The community colleges, which face a cut of \$400-million, or 6.5 percent, were nonetheless asked by the governor to expand the number of students they serve. Jack Scott, chancellor of the community-college system, said in an interview that he would resist the idea. "If indeed this \$400-million cut is enacted, I will make the argument that we should not be required to educate the same number of students," he said. "It's a quality issue." It is impossible to predict just who would be shut out of a college education in California's next round of budget cuts. The state's three higher-education systems employ a complex calculus of ability, seniority, local priorities, and chance to determine which students get in and which ones don't.

But the effects of the most recent round of cuts, in 2008, offer a guide. Transfer students in California, who try to leap from one sputtering system to another, have been shut out of four-year universities at a much greater rate than have incoming freshman applicants. Cal State

enrolls more community-college transfer students than any other university system in the country. But in the 2009-10 academic year, fewer than 38,000 students were able to transfer from community colleges to Cal State, down from a high of 55,000 two years earlier.

Students with strong but not sparkling grades and test scores have found that public colleges that were shoo-ins for people like them just a few years ago have raised their academic standards. Students who live in Los Angeles, Long Beach, San Diego, San Jose, and other cities with overcrowded colleges have been shut out in record numbers. Community colleges and Cal State campuses there simply cannot keep up with regional growth. Only four or five years ago, says Michelle Ponce, a college counselor at Millikan High School, in Long Beach, students could feel comfortable going the traditional route: earning good grades and going to Cal State's Long Beach campus.

But the sheer number of applications that the college receives—69,000 last fall, for 6,250 slots—has forced her to encourage students to look at other options. Private colleges are often a good choice, even if they can be more expensive, she says. Colleges in other states tend to have more room. "I'll tell students in my presentations that if you want to leave the state, good for you," Ms. Ponce says. "We have too many people in the state of California. We need someone to leave right now." Many of the students are in denial, she adds. Their parents don't understand how the landscape has shifted. "I will break out the numbers, and they kind of look at me in complete confusion," she says. "They have no idea."

Long-Term Effects

Reduced enrollment has far-reaching effects in part because recovering from it is difficult for colleges. Even after the recession has ebbed, smaller cohorts of students will still be working their way through the system, limiting the state's degree production for four years or more. James C. Blackburn, Cal State's director of enrollment management, says some of the system's universities also have a difficult time raising enrollment once they have reduced it. Cuts in faculty, staff, and courses are difficult to reverse, and institutions can be hurt by the loss of the tuition income. After the previous round of budget cuts, he says, "it was amazing how hard it was to pump it back up again once the resources started to flow."

"It doesn't always communicate in California, but it's like driving a car on an icy road," he adds. "You don't want to overdo anything because if you swing left or swing right or try to stop too abruptly, the consequences are sometimes fatal."

Given those concerns, Cal State officials say they may not cut into enrollment quite as sharply as they have in the past. Instead, they will consider being more aggressive in other ways to reduce costs: layoffs, reduced pay or furloughs for employees, cuts in the chancellor's office, or, as a last resort, they say, more tuition increases.

But that attitude may change if Californians do not approve a \$9-billion extension of tax increases that is the foundation of Governor Brown's proposed budget. If the package is voted down or fails to get on the ballot because of opposition from Republican lawmakers—a real possibility—colleges could see budget cuts that make the crises of the past few years look mild. Mr. Scott, the community-college chancellor, estimates that the failure of the ballot measure could mean that the state's community colleges would face double the amount of cuts proposed

by the governor, \$800-million rather than \$400-million.

Mr. Brown, who has been in office only since January 3, warned at a news conference introducing the budget proposal on Monday that no state agency would be spared from such an outcome if the tax package were not adopted. "It will be draconian," he said. "And Draco was not a very kindly chief executive."

** Ethnic studies are under attack across the country. Here are two examples, from California and Arizona:

1) Berkeley Ethnic Studies Hunger Strike Enters Third Day

April 28, 2011 Students at the University of California at Berkeley are [hunger striking](#) to protest the university's lack of commitment to ethnic studies.

Five representatives of the group met with a university official yesterday. Vice Chancellor Harry Le Grande agreed to two of their [demands](#) — that he support an ethnic studies bill currently pending in the state legislature and “publicly acknowledge the unfulfilled promise of the creation of a Third World College at UC Berkeley.”

There was no movement, however, on the demand that the university reinstate Ethnic Studies staffers whose positions were recently eliminated, or the demand that the university's “[Operational Excellence](#)” restructuring initiative be halted.

The hunger strikers have been [holding vigil in front of California Hall](#) since their action began, though they left their position for a time overnight when threatened with arrest.

2) [In Arizona: After 519 years, Indigenous Knowledge on Trial](#) (abridged)

Common Dreams, Sept 20, 2011

by [Roberto Rodriguez](#)

Justice. That's a word not normally associated with Arizona. With Sheriff Joe Arpaio and his military tank still on the loose, this will not be changing anytime soon. In Arizona, Arpaio is colorful, but he is actually the least of them. Just recently, Sen. John McCain decided to blame “illegal aliens” for the state's forest fire outbreaks. Aided and abetted by the media, the senator's irresponsible accusations, after touring the 500,000-acre Wallow fire, set off a contagion of wind-aided hate and fear. This month, two cousins were arrested for setting that fire. They were not aliens of any kind. The senator has issued no retractions. This is the climate we live in. But it is actually worse. The borderlands are killing fields. That is not accidental or hyperbole, but U.S. policy since the 1990s. It is a policy that has resulted in thousands of deaths; migrants are intentionally funneled to the most dangerous deserts, mountains and rivers. Not just in Arizona, but the full expanse of the border.

So too brutality against detained migrants. It is widespread and not an aberration. The human rights organization, No More Deaths, is releasing a shocking study that won't so much surprise, but simply confirm these widespread practices [thousands of abuses] at the hands of immigration agents. Here, the “migra” act as hunter battalions, always chasing down people the color of

the earth. The government refers to the funneling as policies of deterrence. Politicians in Iowa, Kansas, New Mexico and Washington have advocated even more direct forms of deterrence: shooting migrants or blowing them up as they cross the border.

Operation Streamline is also one of these deterrence policies. Every day, seventy brown men (and a few women) are herded into the 2nd floor of the federal court building in Tucson. They are all shackled to their wrists, waists and ankles, charged with illegal entry. If the judge spends more than a minute on each detainee, that might be an overestimation as the entire operation generally lasts but an hour. By the time this kangaroo court is done with, the judge will have criminalized them and ritualistically sentenced these men and women to private profit-making detention centers (Corrections Corporation of America). What else can you call them but human sacrifices. The operation is designed not to mete out justice, but to enrich and to send a message (propaganda]. Prior to 9-11-2001, no one would have associated such an operation with the United States. Perhaps apartheid South Africa, but not the U.S.A. It is fitting that it operates in Arizona. It is also no coincidence that several of the governor's closest advisors are implicated in this profit-making scheme.

The same day I go to witness this operation, I watch a movie, *The Postville Raid*: I shake my head. This can't be happening in the land of freedom. The movie is about the infamous Postville, Iowa immigration raid of 2008. It is about the herding of 389 men women and children – mostly from Guatemala – into a cattle facility where they are processed, deported or forced to wear dehumanizing electronic ankle monitors. For 3 days, it's their version of Operation Streamline. For us in Arizona, it's 24/7/365.25. . . . Every time I am anywhere near the militarized border, my stomach turns. There is no justice there. Just scars, like the unnatural wall separating the two Nogaleses. It is the most visible sign of dehumanization. Amidst all this, state senate president, Russell Pearce, who associates with known racial supremacists and who has been recalled and is facing election in November, is convinced that he can legislate the state back into the 19th century.

. . . . This six-year war against MAS is about what is permissible knowledge vs. banned knowledge. It is about banned books and about banned curriculums. In this instance, it is a war against Indigenous Knowledge, this in a state that is also engaged in Ethnic Cleansing.

. . . . Today, this hearing is about Mexican American Studies and its maiz-based curriculum. But the state law itself actually covers all of Ethnic Studies. And yet, a closer inspection reveals that it is a war over education itself. The state here wants to make Swiss cheese out of what can be taught/learned, wants to be able to censor, and still be able to call it education. Short and simple, this is not simply a war against ethnic studies, but a civilizational war on the very idea of education.

What is bothersome is not so much the Inquisitorial questions or answers, but by the very fact that this hearing (a modern day *Auto de Fe*) is taking place at all. I check the calendar; it is 2011, not 1511. I check the map... and not so sure where Arizona belongs. The last hearing is scheduled for Oct 17, though we are not sure what the point of the charades is because as Huppenthal has already shown, regardless of the evidence, he does whatever he feels like. By the way, the tremendous anti-Mexican rhetoric that has resulted from this conflict has also

produced death threats against the students – threats that law enforcement has deemed “a joke.” Not coincidentally, I too have received a series of death threats. Normally, death threats seem to be ignored, but in this case, the person issuing the threats against me will be arraigned at the end of September. Stay tuned.

3) [Colorado State University held a conference in April, 2011 on “the Attack on Ethnic Studies”](#)

*** Environmental and Labor programs are under attack:

1) Pompeo Attacks ‘Radical’ Environmental Justice, Global Warming Internships

By **Brad Johnson** on Sep 12, 2011 at 11:38 am

Rep. Mike Pompeo (R-KS), the top Koch Industries man in Congress, is continuing his assault on the Environmental Protection Agency and its mission to protect the public welfare from toxic polluters. Pompeo has introduced legislation (HR 2876) to kill the [Environmental Justice Eco-Ambassador Program](#), a small graduate student internship program that deals with the connections between economic disparities, discrimination, and environmental health. According to Pompeo, the program is part of the Obama administration’s plot to “indoctrinate” students “to act as tools of this Administration’s radical policies“:

At a time when millions of Americans cannot find work and are saddled with record deficits and crippling environmental regulations, spending \$6,000 of taxpayer money per student **to act as tools of this Administration’s radical policies** is clearly not acceptable — **nor is it ever the role of the federal government to indoctrinate.**

“The requirements outlined the EPA’s stated desire to recruit and hire, at taxpayer expense, only those college students who are ideologically in line with the Obama Administration’s radical environmental policies,” Pompeo claims.

But the “radical” requirements are simply as follows:

Applicants must have previously been involved and/or have a strong interest in environmental justice, social justice issues and/or environmental health disparities in an academic, volunteer and/ or employment setting.

Quite simply, Pompeo believes that justice is a radical ideology, based on willful ignorance of reality. Children living in poverty have higher exposure to toxic chemicals. Neighborhoods near toxic waste facilities are disproportionately minority and poor. Although this internship is a new program, the EPA’s Office of Environmental Justice was established under President George W. Bush, not President Obama.

Although Pompeo claims the federal government should never “indocrinate,” he is a co-sponsor of the [Sanctity of Human Life Act](#), which decrees that “human life shall be deemed to begin with fertilization.”

Pompeo’s legislation would also forbid EPA spending on student “programs related to the study of greenhouse gas emissions.”

2) Attack on Missouri labor studies threatens academic freedom **may 6 2011**

The University of Missouri St. Louis may garner the reputation as a hostile place to work and learn. Such is the fallout from the character assassination of two labor studies instructors, Judy Ancel and Don Giljum, by video con artist Andrew Breitbart.

Breitbart, who conducted previous similar hit jobs on others, including civil rights activist and U.S. Agriculture Department official Shirley Sherrod, released highly edited videos of the instructors supposedly advocating violent tactics. Their actual classroom discussions, a survey of the undoctored tapes showed, were the exact opposite.

The Breitbart videos have been debunked by many sources and have been taken down by YouTube. But the damage from the hit job remains. A firestorm occurred at the two universities involved, but the reactions were markedly different. The University of Missouri Kansas City, where Ancel is director of the Institute for Labor Studies, immediately reviewed the tapes and saw the alterations Breitbart had made. In an April 28 statement, UMKC Provost Gail Hackett said it was "clear" that the instructors were depicted "in an inaccurate and distorted manner by taking their statements out of context and reordering the sequence in which those statements were actually made so as to change their meaning."

The provost also raised serious concerns about the video release of students' images without their consent as a "violation of their privacy rights."

The UMKC provost reaffirmed the university's support for academic freedom and particularly the labor studies program as "an important subject given the role [unions] have played and continue to play in the United States and the world."

A UMKC spokeswoman said in a telephone interview May 6, after they "figured it had been altered" there was no question about support for Ancel. And as far as she knew, the university did not receive any calls for her resignation, she said.

On the other end of the state, however, at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, where Giljum taught labor studies, he says that an assistant dean contacted him and said the administration had concluded "these videos looked bad for the school, the program and me."

Giljum says he told her the videos were "completely altered," but, worried about the survival of the labor studies program, he told her he "would offer his resignation, if necessary" to keep the program going and to make sure none of his students were harmed.

Giljum said the assistant dean told him not to do anything at this time, and said she would get back to him. On April 28 she phoned him and said the provost would like his resignation effective at the end of the semester, Giljum said. UMSL officials issued a statement the same day saying Giljum's resignation was voluntary. Giljum strongly refutes that. "I can assure you it was not" voluntary, he said in a press statement, adding that he felt completely abandoned by the university administration. UMSL Chancellor Tom George cited "negative public reaction" after the videos made their way through the right-wing blogosphere. He said, "Members of the UM System community have received many abusive, demeaning and threatening e-mails and phone calls." Campus officials did not return telephone calls seeking to ascertain how many of the calls demanded Giljum's resignation. Sources said the university received numerous calls in support of Giljum. The UMSL administration's failure to stand up to the intimidation, or issue a statement condemning the videos, or reinstate Giljum, is

drawing wide criticism. The American Association of University Professors called on the University of Missouri System to "speak out clearly and forcefully in defense of the rights of their professors and students."