



THE ALLIANCE FOR PUERTO RICAN EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT (APREE)
Position Paper supporting the Department of Puerto Rican and Latino Studies at Brooklyn College

APREE is an educational advocacy, not for profit organization. Several members and associates of APREE span the almost 50 years since the founding of Brooklyn College's Institute of Puerto Rican Studies, now the Department Puerto Rican and Latino Studies (PRLS).

APREE'S Position on the Department of Puerto Rican and Latino Studies at Brooklyn College

The members of APREE, many of whom are alums of Brooklyn College (CUNY), and the community at large, are compelled to insure the continued existence and development of one of the most respected and long lasting interdisciplinary university programs in the CUNY system. APREE has learned that in spite of a significant increase in enrollment of students in the PRLS department, particularly over the past seven years, and its serving several thousands of students of **all** ethno-racial backgrounds, including the first ever Rhodes Scholar at BC, the attorneys of the first Hispanic women's law office, and the first ever Salutatorian, the college's previous and present administrations have neglected to provide the full-time faculty lines necessary to uphold the mission of PRLS and bolster the transformational educational programs offered by the department. This was affirmed back in 2010 (!) by the External Evaluation Team assigned to render its report on the achievements and developments of the PRLS department during the decade of 2000-2010 and, in broader focus, the department's evolution and internal re-assessment in its prior thirty years of scholarship and activism. This type of assessment is part of the work of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Universities to ascertain the accreditation of the nation's institutions of higher learning. They acknowledged and heaped praise for the almost herculean efforts of a small department with scant resources to carry out and enhance its curricular offerings, service to community, and focused pedagogy. It is appalling that in the last eight years since the issuance of this report the past and present administrations have done next to nothing to implement its recommendations.

It is with deep concern and dismay that the current and past situation of the Department of Puerto Rican and Latino Studies at Brooklyn College, with regard to discriminatory practices of the college's administration, has yet to be resolved. We have been advised that for the past six years the PRLS department has been forced to function with less than the minimal five full-time faculty on tenure or tenure bearing lines, as is the wont for all other departments of the college. The under staffing of the department and administrative decisions lacking the input of the department's chair puts into question the college's commitment to the students, faculty and staff, and limits the department's growth and development.

Requests for support have rendered decisions which can only be interpreted as institutional bias.

Following the aforementioned, APREE requests:

1. An open forum with the purpose of informing the college and wider community as to the administration's intention and/or plans regarding the future of the PRLS department.
2. An immediate replacement of lost faculty lines to a minimum of five.
3. The creation of a presidential commission to address the perceived institutional bias towards faculty, staff and students of color, and actions taken for its purported support of ethno-racial diversity of faculty at BC in its hiring practices.

For more information please send an email to: contactapree@gmail.com.

You can also visit our website www.apree.org.

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