



## Ethnic Studies Department Chair Welcome Letter 2020-21



Yil tol wi hokišak kuš (Good day relatives),

I greet you in the Ishak language of my ancestors. Wi hokišak kuš means we are all relatives/connected. I share this greeting to offer my hope and wish that we in the Ethnic Studies department are building relationships and bonds that go beyond the formal relationships often found in a university context. Over the past seven months we have witnessed many reminders about the importance of Critical Ethnic Studies as a vehicle for engaging, understanding, and addressing inequality in contemporary society. We recognize that there are many uncertain, painful, and stressful pressures on all of us as the United States and the world witness devastation as a result of climate neglect, anti-Black racism, religious and nationalist forms of xenophobia, gendered and sexual violence, continued land dispossession of Indigenous peoples and a global health crisis in the form of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Let us not forget that all of the recent events (fires here in California, hurricanes in the Gulf Coast of the southern United States, mass uprisings in response to police and state violence, repression of voting rights) are not new social or political phenomena. These events are

connected to centuries of colonial violence over land and over people. In Ethnic Studies it is our mission to work to address these issues in ways that will improve the world and make it more just for future generations. We can only achieve this when we come together, strengthen our connections, and support one another as kin, and as family. This year while different from any we have experienced in history; also offers us an opportunity to find ways to thrive through collective action and community building.

As the new department chair of Ethnic Studies, I want to share that I am always here to support you whether you are alumni, students, faculty, staff, administrators or other community members in the department, across campus, in San Diego or wherever your travels may take you in the world. As we begin another academic year, I want to welcome our new faculty members, **Dr. Holly Okonkwo** (<https://ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu/people/Okonkwo.html>) and **Dr. Kianna Middleton** (<https://ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu/people/middleton.html>) who represent the best of what we strive for in Ethnic Studies as a field centered in transformative justice. Please join me in welcoming them both to the department and to UCSD. While she started earlier this year, I would also like to welcome **Cecilia Ozkan** our Chief Administrative Officer in Ethnic Studies, Critical Gender Studies, the International Institute, and the Black Studies Project. Ceci has been instrumental in her leadership and support of the department and our sister programs during an important moment of growth and transition.

The 2020-21 academic year brings many new opportunities to build and grow as a community. 2020 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the department and celebration activities are underway, please keep an eye out for announcements. This year also marks the beginning of a new Native American and Indigenous Studies minor, the first in the history of UC San Diego. As a part of the program we are currently working with the Intertribal Resource Center on identifying an Elder/Culture Bearer in Residence. More information about the minor and elder/culture bearer in residence program can we found below.

<https://ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu/undergraduate-program/NAIS%20Minor.html>

<https://ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu/undergraduate-program/UCSD%20Native%20American%20Elder%20and%20Culture%20Bearer%20in%20Residence%20Program%201.html>

Plans for an Ethnic Studies Pre-Med major continue this year and we are excited to announce new collaborations in curriculum, mentorship, and education initiatives between our Department and the School of Medicine to address issues of racism and public health disparities. Conversations are also in process to create a Certificate in Ethnic Studies to support the growing number of UCSD students, community members, organizations, teachers, high school students, and non-profits around the country looking to expand their knowledge of Critical Ethnic Studies and apply it to their lives and careers. Our undergraduate adviser is working to help us create dual degree double major pathway information sheets to help students interested in double majoring in Ethnic Studies and other disciplines across campus. We have made new changes to our website and are expanding our social media platforms on facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/ethnicstudiesucsd>) and Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/ucsdethnicstudies/>), please add them and share with others in our communities. In addition to these exciting new developments, the proposal to establish a Ph.D. in Ethnic Studies and in Visual Arts with a specialization in Interdisciplinary Environmental Research was approved by the UCSD Graduate Council in June 2020 and is expected to achieve final approval in October. 2020 also brings five new graduate students to our Ethnic Studies kinship circle: **Cecilia Frescas-Ortiz**, **Andrea Gaspar**, **Cheron Laughing**, **Gustav Meuschke**, and **Sierra Sims**. Please join me in welcoming this new dynamic group and check out their bios on the Ethnic Studies website, <https://ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu>.

While there are many new things on the horizon, we want to also welcome your ideas and stories particularly those of our alumni. We would like to create an alumni spotlight feature on our website and to invite alumni to participate in a winter Ethnic Studies Student Recruitment and Outreach Fair/Orientation. Please feel free to email me ([ajolivette@ucsd.edu](mailto:ajolivette@ucsd.edu)) if you have news you would like to share with the UCSD Ethnic Studies community. I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge three of our current graduate students who have recently received awards for their scholarship. **Sara Almalla** is a CSU Chancellor's Doctoral Incentive

Fellow; **Greg Pomaika'i Gushiken** received a fellowship award from the Center for Black, Brown and Queer Studies; and **Rochelle McFee** was awarded an AAUW Doctoral Award for 2020-21. Ethnic Studies doctoral program graduate and UCSD alum, **Dr. Amrah Salomon-Johnson** received the Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship (PPFP) to continue her research work at the University of California, Riverside.

I would also like to congratulate our faculty, **Dr. Roshanak Kheshti** and **Dr. Shelley Streeby** who are Faculty Fellows for 2020-21 at the American Council of Learned Societies. Please join me in congratulating our community on these wonderful accomplishments. In closing, I want to offer deep appreciation and gratitude to all of our staff members in the department and to our students and faculty who work incredibly hard to build sustainable relationships and a learning environment that will cultivate life-long learning and transformative action to build a more just world. I leave you with a poem I wrote some years ago, "Give it All to the People" it is a reflection of my personal and professional commitment to each and every one of you and to the communities and ancestors who allow us all to be here in this place. I want to acknowledge and give thanks and appreciation to the Kumeyaay. We acknowledge and recognize the Kumeyaay people as the original caretakers and on-going stewards of the unceded land known as San Diego. We work and live here mindful of the indigenous peoples in this place, past, present and emerging and thank them for allowing us to be in this space and commit to working with them today, tomorrow, and into the future for their self-determination and stewardship of this territory. I wish you all safety, community, and profound and meaningful new knowledge among community and family this year and into the future.

Wi hokišak kuš,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Jolivéte", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrew Jolivéte Ph.D.,  
Professor and Chair, Department of Ethnic Studies  
Director, Native American and Indigenous Studies

**“Give it All to the People”**

When Shadows Come,  
When Disaster Strikes,  
When Sorrows Invade,  
Give it All to the People.

Give your Love,  
Give Your Heart,  
Give Your Commitment,  
Give it All to the People.

When you Fear Failure,  
When you are Silenced by Machines,  
When you have Lost Your Will,  
When you Lose Sight of Footprints in Sand,  
Give it All to the People.

Give Your Breath,  
Give Your Light,  
Give Your Vulnerability,  
Give it All to the People.

Make the People your Sacred Love  
Make the Sands of Immortality Your Salvation  
Make Love to Justice  
Make Love to City Streets.

When All Around You Seems Unforgiving,  
Give Your Breath,  
Give Your Spirit,  
Give Your Talent,  
Give Your Will,  
Give it All to the People.

Give as it has been Given to you,  
The People, Your Mothers, Grandmothers  
The People, Your Fathers, Grandfathers  
The People, Your Ancestors, Your Ancient Ones  
Give it as it has been Given to You.

Sacrifice,  
Nurture,

Love Unconditionally,  
Whisper Beauty Through Concrete Walls  
Whisper Beauty Through Institutional Systems  
Whisper Beauty in Day and in Night.

When all Around you Seems Like Defeat,  
Give Your Breath,  
Give Your Spirit,  
Give Your Talent,  
Give Your Will,  
Give it All to the People

....and Remember---

You Are

Sacred

You Are

Sacred

You Are

Sacred!----

You Are of and By the People.

When you Give,

You Become Free.

When you Give,

You Become Flesh

The Flesh of the All the People.

You Become Re-Birth

You Become the Light

You Become a Link

You Become----All the Ancient Ones,

Your Become the Answer

You Become All of the People

Over and Over Again

By Andrew Jolivet 5/2/2014, forthcoming in *Gumbo Circuitry: Poetic Routes, Gastronomic Legacies* (2021).

