



401 Golden Shore, Long Beach, CA 90802-4210 T (562) 951-4025 F (562) 951-4860

## **Effectively Engaging Students in NAGPRA Implementation**

The California State Student Association (CSSA) is a student-led organization dedicated to advocating for the needs of California State University (CSU) students and engaging them in higher education policy making at the systemwide, state, and federal levels.

In response to concerns raised by our governing members regarding student engagement in the Federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) implementation process, our Board of Directors unanimously approved a series of recommendations at the October 2023 plenary meeting. These recommendations aim to address the need for student and Native American representation as the Chancellor's Office and CSU campuses begin to implement the legal requirements of the NAGPRA as outlined by the state audit and accepted by the Chancellor's Office. We strongly urge the Chancellor's Office and all twenty-three campuses to implement these recommendations, as they exemplify shared governance.

Student engagement in implementing the audit recommendations is an important component of fostering a supportive and inclusive campus community. Students have expressed concerns regarding what the state audit revealed and want to ensure student and Native American input is taken into account when implementing all audit recommendations. This will ensure that all of the ancestral Human Remains and Cultural Items are returned to their rightful owners via a lens of equity and humanization which are factors that were previously lacking, hence the need for the NAGPRA audit.

By understanding the current state of NAGPRA systemwide and the issues the audit revealed, we encourage you to take the following recommendations into account.

- Ensure student representation on campus level NAGPRA committees.
  - Currently only 11 campuses have the committee, we urge campuses who don't to establish the committee and ensure a student(s) are included in the committee.
  - The Chancellor's Office stated that 8 campuses with more than 100 remains and cultural items will be required to establish a NAGPRA committee, but we

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encourage all campuses with any amount of remains and cultural items to establish a committee.

- Ensure that there is Native American Resource Center and Native American Student Representation on the NAGPRA committee to ensure the ethical nature of the routes taken to implement the audit recommendations such as identifying all the remains and cultural items per each campus.
- We urge the CSU Office of the Chancellor to ensure the staff implementing the Repatriation Implementation Plan, staff providing oversight to campuses, and the staff providing systemwide training identify as Native American.
- We urge the Office of the Chancellor to ensure Native American representation and student representation on the systemwide NAGPRA oversight committee that they will be establishing by December 2023.
  - This committee will be drafting policy and the Chancellor's Office mentioned they will consult with California Tribes and the Native American Heritage Commission, we ask that there are members from each that actually sit on the committee, not just in consultation.
- Ensure that the operational NAGPRA budget that campuses will be required to turn into the Chancellor's Office, which is mandated by their Repatriation Implementation Plan, is presented and approved by the NAGPRA committee for that specific campus before it's sent to the Chancellor's Office.

Sincerely,

*Genesis galilea pompa*

Genesis Galilea Pompa  
Vice President of Systemwide Affairs  
Cal State Student Association

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