

*Christy Lee*

Asian American Task Force

Meeting with Professor Deborah King,  
Chair of African and African American Studies

February 1, 2002

Karen Tani

- I. African and African American Studies
  - A. 30+ years old, has had various names
  - B. Why? A “convergence of factors”
    - 1. Climate was right—external pressure from the national political movement
    - 2. Students identified and requested curriculum
    - 3. College hired special faculty
  - C. Structure of the program—see ORC for info on minor and class offerings; all professors are from different departments (i.e. AAAS technically has no professors of its own); all classes are cross-listed with other departments
  
- II. Recommendations for Asian American Studies
  - A. “Multi-prong attack with long-term and short-term goals”
    - 1. I.D. faculty members that offer relevant courses (e.g. Professor King’s class “Dangerous Intersections” has a unit devoted to Asian Americans); I.D. professors whose work is “on the periphery” of Asian American studies (e.g. Professor Richard Wright in the Geography department is conducting a study on interracial families)
    - 2. Ask College to set aside \$ for “curricular development”
    - 3. Hiring
      - What departments are looking to hire someone with an Asian American studies background (e.g. English)? Ask around
      - Ask Dean of Faculty to set aside \$ for hiring 2-4 new professors with a background in Asian American Studies—he should announce the idea to the departments and let them compete to find suitable candidates within their discipline. (This is a good idea because many departments are looking to expand and they will do so in the way that the College makes easiest)
      - Alumni—get in touch, look for someone to donate (would probably need several million to start a program and recruit a senior scholar to chair it)
      - Ask the College to bring in Asian American Studies dissertation fellows or a 2 year post-doc position (2 year commitment to research and teaching at Dartmouth)
      - “Create synergies”: Think about getting a conference at Dartmouth that could further our cause and get others to start thinking about how Asian American studies relates to their work (e.g. AAAS hosted a

conference at Dartmouth with the Native American studies department about the scholarship on blacks and Native Americans)

- III. New idea: bring together various American ethnic programs to make a U.S. Ethnic Studies Minor (\*This is Professor King's own idea, she supports it)  
-Could create concentrations within this program for the individual areas of ethnic study (LACS is just now getting approved to offer a Latino Studies minor/concentration within the program)
- IV. How to counter arguments against Asian American Studies  
\*It's not about numbers, it's about *scholarship*:
- A. The assumption that only students of Asian ethnicity would take courses in Asian American studies is not a fact. The majority of students that have sought concentrations in African and African American studies were not African American!
  - B. If it is about numbers, then why should we have a Classics department? Very few students, numerically, are interested in these courses
  - C. If Asian American studies is a hotbed for new scholarship, then Dartmouth needs it, regardless of how large the actual Asian American population is.

the German Dept has 4 majors this year  
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