

Proposal to change ESL Department to EMS (English for Multilingual Students)

- 1) Issue: Currently, there is a stigma attached to ESL. Students, especially in outlying areas such as Arvin and Delano, do not want to be labeled ESL, and feel that is a designation they have long outgrown, or that it is a label for Adult School. As a result, filling classes in areas that have a high concentration of non-dominant English speakers has been surprisingly difficult.
- 2) Rationale: The name English for Multilingual Students has a positive connotation for students, especially Generation 1.5 students, those who immigrated as children, but have grown up in the U.S.; they are orally fluent in English, and have not been in an ESL class for many years, but they could still benefit from the linguistic support TESOL instructors at BC provide. For them, the term ESL sounds negative and regressive.

English for Multilingual Students is also the trend in the discipline at other colleges and universities such as UCSB, University of Michigan, San Francisco State University (Composition for Multilingual Students), Ventura College, and East Los Angeles College. These schools have embraced this positive direction, and renaming the ESL Department at BC would demonstrate a similar goal of considering our students.

EMS is also a more accurate description of our demographic as English is not always the students' second language, but sometimes their third or even fourth language. We have students from not only Central or South America but also from South East Asia and Africa who speak multiple languages.

- 3) History: The Department has been known as English as a Second Language as long as it has been in existence (four years), and as long as it has been part of English or Foreign Language/ASL (forever).
- 4) Opposition: None known of except to the cumbersome task of renaming all the courses and getting all of that into CurricuNET...
- 5) Solution: Request approval from Curriculum Committee on name changes, and get CurricuNET to work, perhaps?