TZICATL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION • ANAWAKALMEKAK

Area IP: Indigenous Peoples

A new A–G requirement grounded in Indigenous self-determination and sovereignty

A proposal to the University of California Board of Regents from Tzicatl Community Development Corporation and Anawakalmekak

Indigenous nations are sovereign peoples with the right to govern the education of their citizens and pass on their languages and knowledge. UC's A–G requirements decide what learning counts for admission and shape every California high school. **Yet A–G gives Indigenous nations no authority over that learning and asks no student to understand Indigenous sovereignty.**

Foundations

- **Self-determination in education:** *"Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning."* UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Art. 14(1), endorsed by the United States in 2010 and by the State of California. The Declaration also affirms the right to revitalize and transmit Indigenous languages (Art. 13) and to participate in decisions affecting Indigenous peoples, with free, prior, and informed consent (Arts. 18–19).
- **Rights already in federal law:** Title VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Indian Education) exists in part "to ensure that Indian students gain knowledge and understanding of Native communities, languages, tribal histories, traditions, and cultures" (20 U.S.C. §7402). It covers members of federally recognized, state-recognized, and terminated tribes (including many California rancherias) and their descendants (§7491); requires tribal consultation by districts receiving over $40,000 (§7918) and Indian parent committee approval of programs (§7424); and funds Native language immersion programs (§7453).
- **California law:** AB 1703, the California Indian Education Act (2022), encourages districts to form task forces with tribes to develop Native curriculum and requires them to identify and close Native student achievement gaps. AB 1821 (2024) requires that instruction on Spanish colonization and the Gold Rush include Native Americans' treatment and perspectives, and directs that the next history–social science framework consider this content in consultation with California tribes. A–G, which shapes what high schools teach, does not yet reflect these laws.
- **UC's own standard:** UC's Tribal Lands Workgroup (draft, June 2025) calls for treating tribal sovereignty with the respect owed to foreign nations and consulting tribes early and continually. That standard now guides UC land. It should also guide what UC counts as learning.

WHO A–G LEAVES OUT

- **Federally recognized tribes.** California's 109 federally recognized tribes hold a government-to-government relationship with the United States and already certify Native language teachers for the state, yet have no role in deciding what their students' learning counts for in UC admission.
- **California Native nations without federal recognition.** The other 55 of California's 164 tribes, including Los Angeles's own Gabrieleño/Tongva and Fernandeño Tataviam peoples. They are excluded from the state's American Indian Languages teaching credential and UC's Native American Opportunity Plan, with no role in validating their students' learning.
- **Indigenous Mesoamerican Nations.** Nahua, Maya (including K'iche', Mam, and Q'anjob'al), Zapotec, Mixtec, Triqui, and other nations form large communities in California. Their students are counted as Hispanic or Latino.
- **Native students.** About 31% of Native American graduates complete A–G, vs. 54% of white graduates; American Indian and Alaska Native students are under 1% of UC enrollment.
- **Every student.** Every Californian lives on Native land, yet A–G says nothing about Indigenous nationhood, treaties, or self-government.

INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES AND KNOWLEDGE: CREDIT FOR WHAT STUDENTS ALREADY KNOW

- **Students arrive proficient, with no way to show it.** Many Indigenous students speak Nahuatl, K'iche', Mam, Zapotec, Mixtec, or Triqui at home, or are reclaiming California Native languages. A–G counts Native American languages only through UC-approved courses, and UC accepts AP exams in only eight languages, none Indigenous.
- **Demonstrated proficiency for credit.** High school students could demonstrate Indigenous language proficiency through portfolios, demonstration projects, and community service, validated by the language's nation or community, and earn the A–G language requirement (area E), with advanced proficiency counting toward the recommended third year. The route would be open to all students, with outreach centered on Indigenous students.
- **Indigenous knowledge systems as college readiness.** Validated learning in land-based ecological knowledge, Indigenous mathematics and astronomy, oral history, and governance would count toward Area IP and other areas (see page 2).

THE PROPOSAL: AN EXPANDED A–G REQUIREMENT

Area IP: Indigenous Peoples would become a new A–G subject area required of all UC applicants, beginning as one semester and phased in with funding and access, carrying into admission what Title VI already asks of K–12 education:

- Indigenous sovereignty and self-government; treaties, including California's unratified treaties; and federal and California Indian law
- California Native nations, federally recognized or not, including the local nation whose land each school is on, taught in partnership with that nation
- Indigenous Mesoamerican Nations and other Indigenous peoples of the Americas in California: their histories, languages, and knowledge systems

Criteria would be set jointly by UC faculty and a council of Indigenous nations, federally recognized or not, including Mesoamerican Nations. Curriculum from AB 1703 tribal task forces would gain a path to A–G approval.

How students demonstrate learning: portfolios, demonstrations, and service, not tests

- **Two routes:** an approved Area IP course, or learning validated by an Indigenous nation or language community.
- **Evidence:** a portfolio of learning over time; demonstration projects such as presentations, storytelling, or teaching younger learners, as each nation's protocol allows; and community service such as tutoring, language documentation, or interpreting.
- **Review:** panels of the nation's knowledge holders, teachers, and UC faculty score the work against calibrated rubrics each nation develops, aligned to UC standards. No standardized tests.
- **Sovereignty over knowledge:** each nation decides what knowledge and evidence is shared with UC and how.

A proven model: Anawakalmekak

UC has already approved Indigenous college-preparatory curriculum. Since 2012, Anawakalmekak (Anahuacalmecac International University Preparatory of North America), an Indigenous public charter school in Los Angeles, has developed Nahuatl courses approved for UC A–G, still a rare example of an Indigenous language in a college-preparatory pathway. **Area IP would open that path to every Indigenous nation and school.**

How validated learning would count

Learning	How students demonstrate it	A–G credit
Indigenous language proficiency	Language portfolio; public demonstration; service such as interpreting	Area E (2 years); advanced proficiency toward a 3rd year
Indigenous sovereignty, treaties, and a nation's history and governance	Research portfolio presented to the community or nation; demonstration project	Area IP
Land-based ecological knowledge	Field projects and demonstrations reviewed with knowledge holders	Area IP; science (area D) where aligned
Indigenous mathematics and astronomy (e.g., Mesoamerican calendar systems)	Demonstration projects and portfolios	Area IP; elective (area G) where aligned
Indigenous arts and oral tradition, as protocol allows	Performance, creative portfolio, community presentation	Area IP; arts (area F) where aligned

Path to adoption: a three-year, Indigenous-governed pilot (est. $5.7 million; about 29% to nations and knowledge holders) with six partners, including federally recognized and non-federally recognized California nations and an Indigenous Mesoamerican Nation, independently evaluated.

WE ASK THE REGENTS TO

1. Adopt Area IP: Indigenous Peoples as an expanded A–G requirement, and charge UC's Academic Senate to develop it jointly with Indigenous nations, drawing on Anawakalmekak's approved A–G curriculum as a model.
2. Direct consultation with Indigenous nations in UC's current A–G review before its 2027 recommendations: government-to-government with federally recognized tribes, and with California nations without federal recognition and Indigenous Mesoamerican Nations, consistent with the consultation principles of ESEA Title VI.
3. Fund the pilot, including demonstrated Indigenous language proficiency for area E credit, validated by Indigenous nations through portfolios, demonstrations, and service.

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Sources: UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Arts. 13, 14, 18, 19; ESEA Title VI, 20 U.S.C. §§7402, 7424, 7453, 7491, 7918; AB 1703 (2022); AB 1821 (2024), Ed. Code §§51210, 51220, 51226.3; UC Tribal Lands Workgroup draft report (June 2025); UC Admissions, A–G subject requirement; CTC, CL-893; EdSource, "We speak (Native) American" (May 21, 2026); Anawakalmekak, Programs; IEN Coalition memo (2022), citing the Native American Heritage Commission; PPIC (May 2022).