

## Reappropriate Supports the Asian American Studies Working Group at Duke University

TO:

President Vincent E. Price  
Duke University  
207 Allen Building, Box 90001  
Durham, NC 27708  
[president@duke.edu](mailto:president@duke.edu)

September 19, 2017

Dear Dr. Price,

As founder and editor of Reappropriate – one of the Asian American community’s foremost online outlets for writing on race and gender theory – I write this letter in enthusiastic support of the Asian American Studies Working Group at Duke University, and I urge your university administration to take immediate steps to create an Asian American Studies program at Duke University.

We live in troubled times when racial divisiveness bred of ignorance and hate has once more become normalized in mainstream American politics. Institutions of higher education such as Duke are uniquely positioned to affect this situation by signaling your strong commitment to ethnic studies programs, particularly in North Carolina where unfortunately the injury of racial violence remains far too salient.

Currently, more than one-quarter of Duke University students self-identify as Asian American; yet, Duke still lacks an Asian American Studies Program. Creation of such a program would have profound benefits to both Asian American and non-Asian American students. Ethnic studies programs enable education on people of color’s history as well as contemporary racial identity – topics not comprehensively covered in traditional American history, sociology, or political science classes – and access to such curricula is valuable for all enrolled students. In addition, ethnic studies programs create space for student organizing and community-building activities, which greatly improves student wellness, increases student safety, and enhances overall campus climate. Duke University has a responsibility to its Asian American students as well as to all of its students to make these resources available. Peer institutions that have already implemented Asian American Studies have found those programs often thrive, and are highly popular among students. Graduates of existing Asian American Studies programs – including myself – cite these classes as positive, formative components of our undergraduate college experiences.

For the last two decades, Asian American students, staff, and faculty have worked tirelessly at Duke and across the country to implement Asian American Studies at this nation’s colleges and universities. I ask that Duke University take a leadership role in this fight by creating a robust Asian American Studies Program at Duke. To that end, I wholeheartedly support the demands of the Asian American Studies Working Group at Duke, and I urge you to do the same.

Sincerely,

Jenn Fang, Ph.D.  
Founder / Editor, Reappropriate