



VICE PRESIDENT AND DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

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March 8, 1998

Dean Judith Langlois
Charles & Sarah Seay Regents Professor in Psychology
Dean ad interim
College of Liberal Arts WMB4.102
University of Texas, Austin, TX 78712

Dear Dean Langlois,

We are writing to forward the recommendation of the Asian American Studies Search Committee for the Director's position in Asian American Studies. At our meeting of March 5, 1999, we decided, after some discussion, to set aside the vote that was conveyed to you last week via Richard Lariviere's email message. We have also decided to re-vote in order to convey a clearer and more deliberated recommendation regarding our ranking of the candidates.

For your information, we report to you the new results that were obtained from our re-vote. They are as follows: 4 first-place votes and 2 second-place votes for Thomas Nakayama; 3 second-place votes and 2 third-place votes for David Li; 2 first-place votes and 1 second-place vote for Sheng-Mei Ma. On the basis of these results, it is clear that Thomas Nakayama is our most highly ranked candidate.

We thus recommend that Dr. Thomas Nakayama of Arizona State University, Tempe be offered the Directorship of Asian American Studies. If an offer is extended to Dr. Nakayama and he does not accept, then our second recommendation is David Li. In the event that neither Nakayama nor Li could come, then we would recommend Sheng-Mei Ma.

There are several reasons why we have recommended Dr. Nakayama to you as our highest ranked candidate. Firstly, Dr. Nakayama has a proven track record of administrative experience, program development, and community service. He helped start the Asian American Studies Program at Arizona State University, and he also serves as the Director of that program. He was instrumental in raising \$225,000 to

establish an endowment in Asian American Studies at the University of Arizona. He has been a member of the Scholarly Advisory Board of the Japanese American National Museum since 1992, and in 1996 he received

a grant from the Arizona Council of the Humanities to host a Smithsonian exhibition at the Phoenix Public Library. Also important, in our view, is Dr. Nakayama's commitment to working with students as demonstrated by his service, from 1993 to the present, as faculty advisor for the ASU Asian Coalition, which oversees and coordinates the activities of 15 Asian and Asian American student organizations.

Secondly, Dr. Nakayama's record of scholarship includes two notable co-edited volumes (ASIAN AMERICANS: THE YEAR 2000 AND BEYOND and ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS IN THE SOUTHWEST) which demonstrate his concern with developing an Asian American Studies program that will be sensitive to the particularities in the experiences of Asian Americans in the Southwest, and that will establish a scholarly agenda for the coming decade beyond the year 2000. His forthcoming book with Judith Martin on WHITENESS: THE SOCIAL COMMUNICATION OF IDENTITY, is a part of emerging, cutting-edge scholarship in American Studies and Ethnic Studies as well. In our opinion, Dr. Nakayama demonstrates a forward-looking view that will enable UT Austin to develop a unique, nationally recognized program in Asian American Studies. He is also the Associate Editor of the WESTERN JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION. In 1998, he received a Fulbright to work in Belgium.

Thirdly, Dr. Nakayama has served as the Vice-chair and Chair of the Asian Pacific American Caucus of the SCA. He is currently the program chair for the Annual Association of Asian American Studies Meetings to be held in Arizona in 2000, and for the last three years has hosted an annual Asian American Studies conference at ASU. We are impressed with Dr. Nakayama's track record in organizing campus wide and national level conferences on Asian American Studies, and have every expectation that he will continue to do so at UT Austin.

Fourthly, Dr. Nakayama's teaching interests in Asian American Studies on such subjects as "Cultural Studies," "Race and the Media," Minorities and Women in Advertising," and "Popular Culture" fill gaps in the liberal arts curriculum at UT, but are also compatible with faculty interests in American Studies, Journalism, RTF, and Speech Communication.

For these reasons, we urge you to extend an offer to Dr. Nakayama. We would be happy to meet with you should you wish further clarification or discussion regarding our views of these candidates. We also wish to apologize for any misunderstandings that may have been caused by our earlier email messages. We are very grateful for your support of Asian American Studies, and we are excited about the prospect of building here a first-rate program that will further advance our teaching mission, promote high quality research in this newly emerging field, and eventually enhance the national reputation of the University. Thank you very much for your time and attention to this matter.

Yours Sincerely,

Asian American Studies Director Search Committee

