

Battle over ethnic studies blooming again

Spring is returning to the University of Hawaii Manoa campus and the problem of the future of the ethnic studies program has sprung up like a perennial flower.

Investigations and reports on the controversial program by two faculty committees are just about ready.

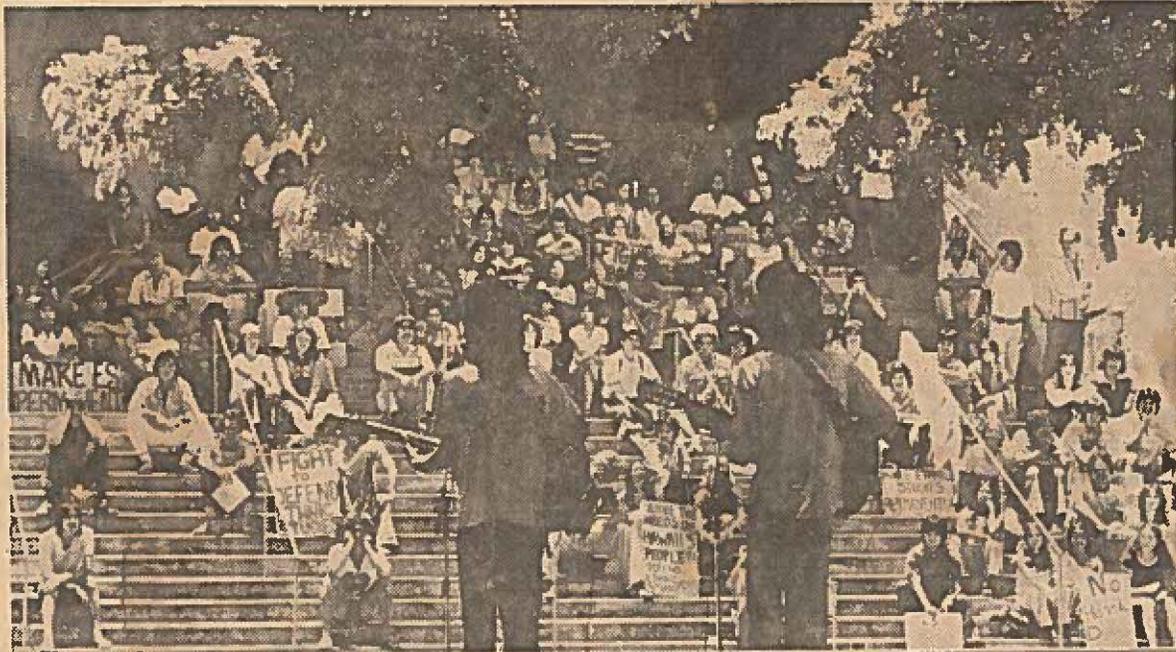
The supporters of the program — including the present staffers, many of its students, other faculty and students at Manoa and a People's Committee to Defend Ethnic Studies in the community — want the temporary status which has lasted for half a dozen years to end with a permanent, recognized, unified program basically as it exists today.

The Manoa Chancellor's Office, however, last year recommended that the program be broken up and that the popular courses the program offers be distributed to a variety of other departments, such as American studies, history and anthropology.

A series of demonstrations and marches on the campus last term finally won from the administration the agreement that the chancellor's proposal was just a suggestion and that the faculty ought to have another chance to consider the program's worth.

Although the faculty report has not been released, reportedly it calls for a unified program to be retained but with an upgraded faculty and other changes that may not sit well with the program's supporters.

more than 100 supporters of the pro-



Students get into the swing of spring and the sounds of protest yesterday at a rally which stopped for awhile at the Campus Center.

Advertiser photo by Roy Ito

gram, mostly students and a few faculty involved with the program, held a rally and a march up to Hawaii Hall where they presented two requests to the Chancellor's Office.

The supporters of the program asked for a chance to meet with Chancellor Douglas Yamamura after he receives the faculty reports but before he makes a recommendation. They also asked that a final recommendation be made before the end of the school year, when many students leave the campus for summer vacation.

If the decisions go against the ethnic studies program or if the program's supporters cannot agree with the final recommendations, campus observers predict there is likely to be another series of demonstrations and sit-ins such as have marked periods of decision about the program all through its existence.

The next crucial point for the program's future will be a Manoa Faculty Senate meeting next week to consider its committee's recommendations.

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