

# California State University, Fresno

CSU

ARMENIAN STUDIES PROGRAM  
Fresno, California 93740



## THE SHARPOON NEWS SERVICE

### FOR YOUR INFORMATION

CSU Fresno Armenian Studies Program activities as reported in local, national, and international media.

Release #33  
November  
December 1987

- ARCHIVE -

SOURCE The Armenian Reporter- Fresh Meadows, N.Y.

DATE November 5, 1987

SUBJECT Dickran Kouymjian Announces Special Awards

PAGE 1 of 1

Presentation

## CSU Will Honor Donors at Dinner December 6; Awards to Be Given

FRESNO, Calif. - The California State University, Fresno Armenian Studies Program will hold their annual banquet in honor of donors to the Leon S. Peters Business Building and Valley Business Center on Sunday afternoon, December 6, 1987, in the Residence Dining Hall on campus. The proceeds of the banquet will benefit the drive for an Endowed Chair in Armenian Studies at CSU Fresno.

Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, Director of the Armenian Studies Program, announced that there will

be a special awards presentation to the outstanding donors to the new Peters Building which will be the home of the Armenian Studies Program and the Center for Armenian Studies when it opens in the fall of 1988.

Guests at the banquet will be treated to the unusual gourmet meal, will listen to an important keynote speaker, and surprise entertainment. More information will be forthcoming. Those interested in contacting the Armenian Studies Program can telephone (209) 294-2669/2832.

**CSUB**

**ARMENIAN STUDIES**

**PROGRAM**

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93740

**-- ARCHIVE --**

**SOURCE** The Armenian Observer-Los Angeles, CA

**DATE** November 11, 1987

**SUBJECT** CSUFresno Armenian Studies Program Annual

**PAGE** 1 of 1

Banquet To Be Held December 6, 1987

# **THE ARMENIAN OBSERVER**



**FRESNO**

DEC. 6 — Sunday, CSUFresno Armenian Studies Program Annual Banquet. Benefit Dirve for an Endowed Chair.

- ARCHIVE -

SOURCE Asbarez English Edition Glendale, CA

DATE November 14, 1987

SUBJECT The Annual Banquet of CSUF Armenian Studies

PAGE 1 of 1

Program To Be Held on December 6, 1987

## ASBAREZ ENGLISH EDITION

**Prof. Hovannisian  
Will Address CSUF  
Annual Banquet  
in Fresno, Dec. 6**

**FRESNO, Calif.** - Dr. Richard Hovannisian, Professor of Armenian History and Associate Director of the G.E. von Grunebaum Center for Near Eastern Studies at UCLA, will be the keynote speaker at the annual banquet of the California State University, Fresno Armenian Studies Program to be held on December 6, 1987 in the St. Paul Armenian Church Haig Berberian Social Hall.

Dr. Hovannisian, a San Joaquin Valley native, has played an active role in Armenian community life and was instrumental in the recent establishment of an Endowed Chair in Modern Armenian History at UCLA. He is the author of the highly acclaimed historical series, **The Republic of Armenia**, an authoritative account of the formation of the Armenian Republic.

Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, Director of the Armenian Studies Program, announced that fund raising has begun for an Endowed Chair in Armenian Studies at CSU Fresno. The fund drive follows the successful campaign to raise monies for the Leon S. Peters Business Building.

The Dec. 6 annual banquet of the Armenian Studies Program will honor the donors to the Leon S. Peters Business Building and the Center for Armenian Studies, which will be housed there after August, 1988. Special awards will be given to recognize the donors including an Outstanding Donor of the Year Award.

A special entertainment program is being planned for the evening with guest artists from Los Angeles.

The donation for the annual banquet will be \$25.00 per person and reservations can be made through the Armenian Studies Program at (209) 294-2669/2832. All reservations must be made in advance. There will be no tickets sold at the door.

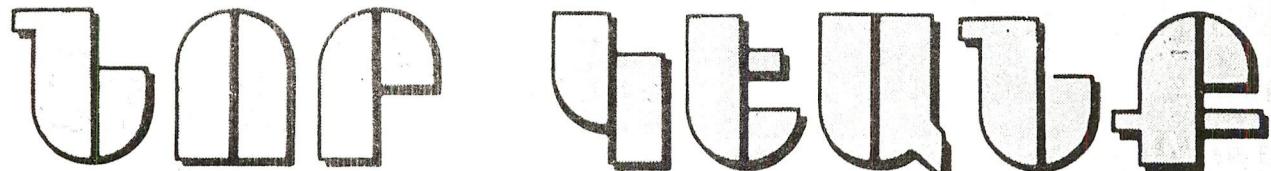
SOURCE

Nor Gyank; Glendale, CA

SUBJECT

Papasian and Armani Translate Armenian Poems  
at CSUF

PAGE 1 of 1



Circulation: 14,000, certified by Glendale Rotary Inc.

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**NOR GYANK — NEW LIFE ARMENIAN / ENGLISH**

**A Program of Translated  
Armenian Poems Performed  
by G. Papasian  
and N. Armani**

CSU Fresno Armenian Studies Program  
Annual Banquet

Noted stage and film performers Gerald Papasian and Nora Armani of Los Angeles will perform a program of Armenian poems in translation at the annual banquet of the California State University, Fresno Armenian Studies Program on Sunday, December 6, 1987 in the St. Paul Armenian Church, Haig Berberian Social Hall. The banquet will honor the donors and friends of the Armenian Studies Program.

Papasian and Armani are the stars of the recent production of "Sojourn at Ararat," a play based on translations of Armenian poetry through the ages.

The public is cordially invited to attend and to support Armenian Studies in Fresno.

## - ARCHIVE -

SOURCE	The Armenian Mirror-Spectator; Water town, MA	DATE	December 1987
SUBJECT	Mesrob Mirigian Donates \$20,000 to Fundraising Drive at CSUF	PAGE	1 of 1

## Mesrob Mirigian Donates \$20,000 For An Endowed Professorship At CSU/Fresno

Mesrob Mirigian of Fresno, CA recently donated \$20,000 to the fundraising drive for an endowed professorship in the Armenian Studies Program at California State University/Fresno.

The gift was given in memory of his late wife, Mary, and his mother and father, Kohar and Krikor Mirigian.

A gallery that will be located adjacent to the Armenian Studies Program offices in the Leon S. Peters Business Building now under construction at CSUF, will be dedicated to Mr. Mirigian and his family.

Joining her father on the occasion of the check presentation to CSUF President Harold H. Haak, was Penny Mirigian, a teacher at Fresno's Edison Com-

puter School and longtime supporter of the Armenian Studies Program at CSU, Fresno.

Mesrob Mirigian, who was active for many years in San Joaquin Valley agriculture, was born in Whitinsville, Maine in 1898. His wife was born in Providence, Rhode Island, and the couple met in Fresno in 1920.

His father Krikor, came to the United States in 1885 from Itchmé, a small village in the Kharpert district of historic Armenia.

Mr. Mirigian received a special award at the Armenian Studies Program annual banquet on Sunday, December 6, in recognition of his support for the Program.

SOURCE The Armenian Reporter- Fresh Meadows, N.Y.

DATE 3 December 1987

SUBJECT Mesrob Mirigian Contributes \$20,000

PAGE 1 of 1

For Professorship in the Armenian Studies Program

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FRESNO, Calif. - Mesrob Mirigian of Fresno has donated \$20,000 to the fund drive for an endowed professorship in the Armenian Studies Program at California State University Fresno.

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Mirigian will receive a special award at the Armenian Studies Program annual banquet Sunday, December 6, in recognition of his support for the Program.

*Share Your Views*

## - ARCHIVE -

SOURCE The Armenian Reporter; Fresh Meadows, N.Y.DATE December 1987SUBJECT Papasian and Armani To Perform Armenian Poems At CSUF BanquetPAGE 1 of 1

## CSU Fresno Armenian Studies Program Holds Annual Banquet

FRESNO, Calif. - Noted stage and film performers Gerald Papasian and Nora Armani of Los Angeles will perform a program of Armenian poems in translation at the annual banquet of the California State University, Fresno Armenian Studies Program on Sunday, December 6, 1987, in the St. Paul Armenian Church Haig Berberian Social Hall. The banquet will honor the donors and friends of the Armenian Studies Program.

Mr. Papasian and Ms. Armani are the stars of the recent production of "Sojourn at Ararat," a play based on translations of Armenian poetry through the ages. The **Los Angeles Times** said about the play, "Gerald Papasian and Nora Armani offer an effusive, even ardent reading of the play in verse created from translations of Armenian poetry through the ages. . . . Papasian and Armani put us a labor of

love."

**Drama-League** said, "Papasian and Armani are two gifted actors who are at once animate and energetic . . . 'Sojourn to Ararat' is a powerful statement about the tenacity and endurance of the Armenian people."

The **L.A. Weekly** in its Theater Pick of the Week said, "the simple yet exquisite direction focuses our attention on two dynamic performers who know how to blend their gorgeous voices and expertly trained bodies to create theatrical magic . . . "

Mr. Papasian and Ms. Armani have appeared internationally in Paris, Cairo, Montreal, and in

Yerevan to name only a few. They have appeared on television, "Cagney and Lacey" (Papasian) and "St. Elsewhere" (Armani) and on film.

The performance at the annual banquet of the CSUF Armenian Studies Program will benefit the drive to establish an endowed chair in Armenian Studies at CSUF. Tickets for the banquet are available for a donation of \$25.00 per person and can be reserved through the ASP at (209) 294-2669/2832 in advance only.

The public is welcome to attend and to support Armenian Studies in Fresno.

SOURCE NOR GYANK-Glendale, CA

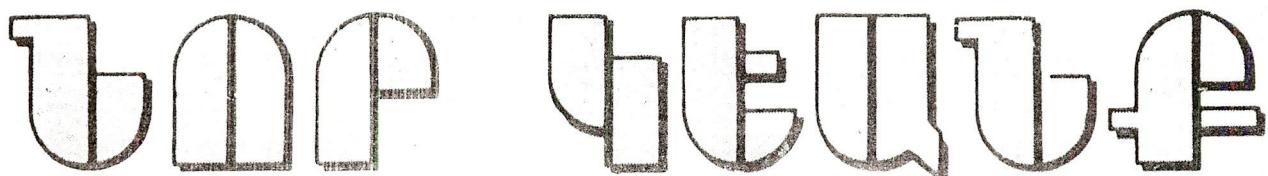
- ARCHIVE -

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93740

SUBJECT CSUF Armenian Studies Program Annual Banquet PAGE 1 of 1

DATE 3 December 1987

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## CSUF Armenian Studies Program Annual Banquet

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Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, Director of the Armenian Studies Program, has announced that fund-raising has begun on an Endowed Chair in Armenian Studies at CSU Fresno. The fund drive follows the successful campaign to raise monies for the Leon S. Peters Business Building. The annual banquet of the Armenian Studies Program will honor the donors to the Leon S. Peters Business Building and Center for Armenian Studies, which will be housed in the new building when construction is completed in August of 1988. Special awards will be given to recognize the donors including an Outstanding Donor of the Year Award.

A special entertainment program is being planned for the evening with guest artists from Los Angeles. More on this in upcoming weeks.

The donation for the annual banquet will be \$25.00 per person and reservations can be made through the Armenian Studies Program at (209) 294-2669/2832. All reservations must be made in advance and there will be no tickets sold at the door. The community is cordially invited to attend.

SOURCE NOR GYANK-Glendale, CA

SUBJECT Gift Will Support CSUF  
Armenian Endowed Chair

PAGE 1 of 1

# NIOR GYANIK

## Gift Will Support CSUF Armenian Endowed Chair



L. to R.—Dr. Joseph Penbera, Dean of the School of Business; CSUF President Dr. Harold Haak; Mesrob Mirigian; Penny Mirigian; and Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, Director of the ASP

Mesrob Mirigian of Fresno has donated \$20,000 to the fund drive for an endowed professorship in the Armenian Studies Program at California State University Fresno.

The gift was given in his name and in memory of Mirigian's late wife, Mary, and his mother and father, Kohar and Krikor Mirigian.

A gallery that will be located adjacent to the Armenian Studies Program offices in the Leon S. Peters Business Building now under construction at CSUF will be dedicated to Mirigian and his family.

Joining her father on the occasion of the check presentation to CSUF President Harold H. Haak, was Penny Mirigian, a teacher at Fresno's Edison Computech School and longtime supporter of the Armenian Studies Program at CSU, Fresno.

Mesrob Mirigian, who was active for many years in San Joaquin Valley agriculture, was born in Whitenville, Maine in 1898.

Mesrob Mirigian, better known in the United States in about 1885 from Itchme, a small village in the Kharpert (Harpoot) district of historic Armenia.

Mirigian will receive a special award at the Armenian Studies Program annual banquet Sunday, December 6 in recognition of his support for the Program.

SOURCE ASBAREZ- Glendale, CA

- ARCHIVE -

DATE December 11, 1987

SUBJECT Mirigian Contributes to CSUF

PAGE 1 of 1

Armenian Studies Program Endowment

# Asbarez

## Mirigian Contributes to CSUF Armenian Studies Program Endowment



CSUF President, Dr. Harold Haak  
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SOURCE Armenian Life Weekly--Watertown, MA

- ARCHIVE -

DATE December 11, 1987

SUBJECT Gift Will Support CSUF Armenian  
Endowed Chair

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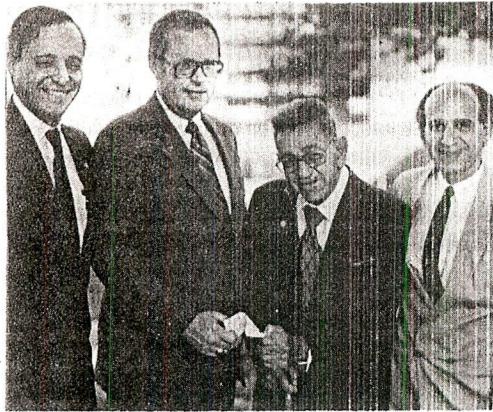
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# The Armenian Mirror-Spectator

THE FIRST ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARMENIAN WEEKLY IN THE U.S.A.



Left to right: Dean Joseph Pembera; CSUF President Harold H. Haak; benefactor Mesrob Mirigian and Prof. Dickran Keuymjian.

## \$20,000 Gift Will Support Armenian Endowed Chair

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# THE ARMENIAN OBSERVER

## \$50,000 Collected for CSUF Armenian Studies at Banquet

FRESNO—Nearly \$50,000 has been donated toward an endowed chair for the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State University, which would be just the sixth endowed chair nationwide in Armenian Studies.

Barlow Der Mugrdechian, one of two teachers in the FSU program, said that \$300,000 is needed to establish the chair, which would be used to attract a top Armenian studies scholar as a professor in the program.

Richard Francois, director of development and community relations for FSU, said yearly interest from the \$300,000 — which would be about \$20,000 — would be used to supplement the endowed chair's FSU-paid salary and to cover expenses such as research.

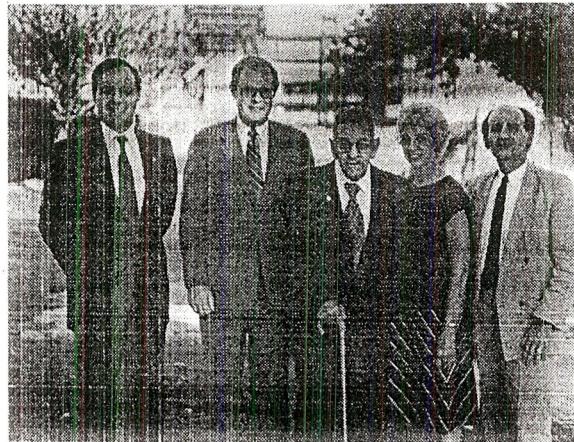
The occupant of the endowed chair would be paid top FSU salary, about \$50,000 a year.

Der Mugrdechian said the goal is to collect the \$300,000 within three years.

The most recent donation to the Armenian studies chair came from Mesrob Mirigian, who gave \$20,000 in memory of his wife, Mary, and parents, Kohar and Krikor Mirigian.

A gallery adjacent to the Armenian Studies Program offices in the Leon S. Peters Business Building, which is under construction, will be dedicated to Mirigian and his family.

Mirigian has been a farmer in the valley.



L. to r. Dr. Joseph Penbera, Dean of the School of Business; CSUF President Dr. Harold Haak; Mesrob Mirigian; Penny Mirigian; Dr. Dickran Kuymjian, Director of the Armenian Studies Program.

Other donors are the Armenian Students Organization, the Armenian National Committee, the Armenian Alumni Association, the National Institute of Armenian Culture, and many individuals.

Der Mugrdechian said the endowed chair will guarantee the permanency of Armenian studies at FSU. Currently, the only tenured professor in the program is Chairman Dickran Kouymjian.

There are about 400 students of Armenian ancestry attending FSU, Der Mugrdechian said. The 10-year-old program offers six to eight classes each semester.

"Once we have an endowed chair it will put emphasis on research as well," Der Mugrdechian said, adding that perhaps the program can expand to

State are the only public universities in the state to offer Armenian studies programs. Universities with endowed chairs in Armenian studies are UCLA, Harvard, Columbia and the University of Michigan, the last one having two chairs in the same university.

Glendale Community College in Glendale, California, offers courses in Armenian language and Armenian history, as well as a course on the Armenian Diaspora, in the Ethnic Studies Program of the College. The language classes are taught by Osheen Keshishian and the others by Prof. Levon Marashlian.

Armenian Studies degree is also given at the American Armenian International College, a four-year private college in La Verne, California.

## Mesrob Mirigian Donates \$20,000 to CSUF

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**SUB****ARMENIAN STUDIES****PROGRAM**

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93740

- ARCHIVE -

DATE 31 December 1987

SOURCE The Fresno Bee, Fresno, CA

SUBJECT \$50,000 Donated For Armenian  
Studies Chair At CSUF

PAGE 1 of 1

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Richard Francois, director of development and community relations for FSU, said yearly interest from the \$300,000 - which would be about \$20,000 - would be used to supplement the endowed chair's FSU-paid salary and to cover expenses such as research.

The occupant of the endowed chair would be paid top FSU salary, about \$50,000 a year.

Der Mugrdechian said the goal is to collect the \$300,000 within three years.

The university has a fund for an endowed chair in the journalism department in the name of former FSU journalism professor Roger Tatarian. There has been about \$50,000 collected for the Tatarian chair.

The most recent donation to the Armenian studies chair came from Mesrob Mirigian, who gave \$20,000 in memory of his wife, Mary, and parents, Kohar and Krikor Mirigian.

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Der Mugrdechian said the endowed chair will guarantee the permanency of Armenian studies at FSU. Currently, the only tenured professor in the program is Chairman Dickran Kouymjian.

There are about 400 students of Armenian ancestry attending FSU, Der Mugrdechian said. The 10-year-old program offers six to eight classes each semester.

"Once we have an endowed chair it will put emphasis on research as well," Der Mugrdechian said, adding that perhaps the program can expand to offer a full major in Armenian studies. Currently it offers only a minor.

Der Mugrdechian said the endowed chair should be a drawing card for FSU's Armenian Studies Program, as will the program's new offices in the Peters building.

"I definitely think it will make us more competitive," he said.

The University of California at Los Angeles and Fresno State are the only public universities in the state to offer Armenian studies programs. Universities with endowed chairs in Armenian studies are UCLA, Columbia University, Harvard University and the University of Michigan.

Fresno Bee, Fresno, Calif.

SOURCE The California Courier; Glendale, CA DATE 31 December 1987

SUBJECT \$50,000 Donated For Armenian Studies Chair At Fresno State

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—By Anne Dudley  
Fresno Bee

CSUN Asked to Give Course Full Status

## Class in Armenian at a Crossroads

By PAMELA MORELAND

Melissa Sherwood wanted to learn more about the world of her ancestors so this fall she enrolled in an Armenian language class at California State University, Northridge.

Lebanese emigrant Peter Tashjian signed up for the course so he could brush up on the Armenian he had learned as a child.

And Mary Burunsuzyan, who spoke an eastern Armenian dialect in her Soviet Armenia homeland, took the course to learn the western Armenian dialect that is more commonly heard in the United States.

Although their reasons for taking the class are different, the three are united on one issue—they want the CSUN foreign languages department to add Armenian to its regular curriculum and pay their professor's salary.

For five years, the students say, the Armenian class has been treated like the university's stepchild. CSUN has never paid the instructor's salary, leaving the Armenian Students Assn. responsible for an honorarium of \$800 to \$1,200 each semester. The only thing CSUN has provided is a classroom.

"The system is not fair," Burunsuzyan said. "Why should French and Spanish professors be paid by the university and not the Armenian professor?"

This year, for the first time, Armenian was offered for credit on an experimental basis through the foreign languages department and, as a result, was listed in the college catalogue. Thirty-seven students signed up, more than three times the number who enrolled the previous semester. But, despite the growing interest, the future of the once-a-week class remains uncertain.

### Limited Offerings

The foreign languages department does not have the \$14,000 a year needed to hire a part-time Armenian language professor, department Chairman Alvin Ford said.

The department is limiting its offerings to commonly studied foreign languages such as French, Spanish, German, Russian and Hebrew. In the next few years, Ford said, his department will inaugurate courses in Japanese and Chinese as part of the university's attempt to strengthen ties with Asian universities and businesses.

A Swahili class is offered by the Pan-African Studies Department and Assyrian is offered through the CSUN extension program.

But, since the university has no plans to add an Armenian language professorship, the students worry that it will become increasingly difficult to attract academically qualified volunteers to teach the class for a small honorarium. What's more, students say they cannot raise enough money on a regular basis to pay an instructor even a minimal \$800 a semester.

Ford would like to solve the problem by establishing an endowment that would use private contributions to pay the instructor's salary. That way, the faculty could be enlarged without the burden of another salary. But establishing an endowment is no sure thing.

Interest in the language has grown as the number of Armenian students at CSUN has increased. There are about 750 students of Armenian descent among CSUN's 21,000 full-time students, Armenian student leaders say.

Although ethnic pride among the Armenian students has played a large part in the popularity of the class, educators say there are solid academic reasons for offering Armenian at any college.

### Used by Researchers

Biblical scholars frequently study Armenian in order to read one of the earliest translations of the Bible, said Dickran Kouymjian, director of the Armenian studies program at California State University, Fresno. Armenian is also used by researchers studying Middle Eastern Literature.

Anthropologist Margaret Mead, who considered Armenian an easy language to master, had recommended that it be adopted as a universal second language instead of Esperanto, a language developed in the 1880s.

Apparently recognizing that importance, Harvard University in 1959 became the first American college to establish a separate Armenian studies pro-

gram. Armenian language and cultural courses are also taught at UCLA, the University of California, Berkeley and Columbia University.

The CSUN Armenian class meets every Monday afternoon in a large, drafty lecture room on campus. Before the weekly session starts, most of the students converse in English laced with the latest Valley slang. But all English stops once instructor Hermine Mahserejian, an energetic, strong-willed woman, walks in. For the next three hours, only Armenian is spoken.

Although some students already know how to speak Armenian, the class is taught as if everyone is a beginner.

By taking the semester-long course, students can complete part of their general education requirements or credits. Their reasons are more emotional. They talk about preserving their heritage, acquiring the ability to talk to grandparents and in-laws, gaining insights about their background.

#### Letters From Aunt

"In the past, when I would get letters from my aunt in Armenia, I would have to give them to my parents so they could read them to me," said Gevork Shirinian, who, before this fall, could speak the language but not read or write it.

"Now that I've taken the class, I can read her letters myself. I think it is important for a person to be able to speak, to read and to write in their native language," he added.

Because the students' feelings about the course are so intense, its precarious status is especially disturbing. Some students view the university's unwillingness to commit itself to paying a professor as an

insult to the Armenian culture.

"I'm really upset at the school's position because it makes it seem that Armenian is not one of the important languages," Sherwood said. "They support the other languages, like Japanese and Chinese. They should fund Armenian the same way."

Sherwood said she may start a petition drive to demand that the university add Armenian to its curriculum. Other class members said they may stage demonstrations to dramatize the need for CSUN to fund the class.

#### Seek Private Funding

When classes resume in January, Mahserejian will join Ford in seeking private funding for the Armenian language professor.

But Ford will have to raise much more than the \$14,000 he said his department needs to hire a part-time instructor. To make certain there is enough money to sustain endowed positions for several decades, CSUN guidelines require a minimum donation of \$1 million for a fully endowed chair, \$500,000 for a partially endowed chair and \$100,000 for "special faculty support" funds. Which amount would be needed for the Armenian professorship has not been decided.

While Mahserejian agrees with the idea of an endowment to fund the position, she wants to make sure contributions come from a variety of sources.

"I don't think the entire responsibility should fall on the Armenian community," she said. "This is a language that has many academic applications, so the entire community should be asked to contribute."