February 28, 2013

Dr. Diana Guerin, Chair
Academic Senate, CSU
The California State University
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, CA 90802-4210

Dear Dr. Guerin:

RE: January 17-18, 2013, Senate Resolutions

Thank you for forwarding the packet of resolutions adopted by the Academic Senate of the California State University at its January 17-18, 2013, meeting. We are pleased to provide the responses below:


   The resolution is supported for its intent and scope. The CSU recognizes its important role in providing expedient, effective pathways for transfer students into STEM programs and appreciates the Senate’s support in this effort.

2) AS-3102-12/EX/AA (Rev): A Smoke-Free California State University

   The CSU will begin the process to ban all tobacco products throughout the 23 campus system. The University of California (UC) serves as a model for the elimination of tobacco products and the CSU will utilize their approach and modify processes as necessary. Although the Senate’s resolution calls for a “smoke-free” CSU, the focus will be on banning the use and sales of all tobacco products, and initiate tobacco cessation programs. To this end, the Chancellor will create a special taskforce to move this agenda forward; a report will be expected before the end of this calendar year.
3) **AS-3103-12/APEP (Rev): Towards an Evidence-Based Culture in Establishing Academic Policies and Initiatives**

Decisions regarding the development of programs and initiatives are always best informed by solid empirical research. The Senate’s resolution on this issue is welcome and we agree with the intent. However, considering the way some policies are shaped, research can be overshadowed by legislative mandates or what may be in vogue at the time. Policy formulation can also be shaped by inadequate empirical evidence that is born of methodological and/or statistical flaws. By its pure nature, even the best social science research is suggestive rather than definitive. For example, it is widely believed that AAC&U’s “high-impact” practices lead to student success, yet, the empirical research on this topic is thin and in some cases nonexistent. This has not curtailed the national movement to infuse “high-impact” practices into the curriculum. Many examples can be used but when faculty and administrators have the time, ability, and resources to develop pilot programs, conduct research, or review the empirical literature to serve as a guide for new initiatives and programs, we are all better served.

4) **AS-3108-13/FGA: Commendation of Chancellor Timothy White’s Requesting a 10% Reduction in Salary**

Chancellor Timothy White’s request and acceptance of a 10 percent salary reduction, from that initially proposed by the CSU Board of Trustees, demonstrates his sensitivity to and understanding of the CSU’s persistent fiscal constraints. The CSU appreciates the Senate’s recognition of Chancellor White’s action, which serves the interests of the CSU – its faculty, staff, students, and leadership.

5) **AS-3109-13/AA: Support for the Continued Inclusion of Upper Division General Education within WASC Accreditation Guidelines**

The CSU recognizes the ASCSU’s support for the continued inclusion of upper division general education (GE) within WASC accreditation guidelines. After the passage of the Senate’s resolution, WASC has reversed its position and CFR 2.2a will remain in their accreditation guidelines.

Sincerely,

Ronald E. Vogel
Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
c: Dr. Timothy P. White, Chancellor
Dr. Ephraim P. Smith, Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer
Dr. Benjamin F. Quillian, Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer
Mr. Garrett P. Ashley, Vice Chancellor, University Relations and Advancement
Ms. Gail E. Brooks, Vice Chancellor, Human Resources