

ASCSU Chair's Report
May Plenary to September Plenary
September 13, 2016

It has been my privilege to represent the Academic Senate of the California State University since June 1, 2016. I offer the following listing of my activities followed by summary and commentary on key issues that arose during that time.

Meetings and Activities

May

- Board of Trustees meeting

June

- Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates meeting in Oakland
- Academic Council meeting at the Maritime Academy
- California State Student Association (CSSA) meeting in Monterey Bay
- Meetings with AVC Chris Mallon, Christian Osmena (Department of Finance Principal Budget Analyst), and Lark Park (Governor Brown's Senior Advisor for Policy)
- Graduation Initiative 2025 Advisory Committee in Long Beach
- Food and Housing Insecurity Conference in Long Beach
- ASCSU Executive Committee via Zoom
- Intersegmental Coordinating Committee in Sacramento

July

- Quantitative Reasoning Task Force Report meeting with EVC Blanchard in Long Beach
- ASCSU Executive Committee via Zoom
- Graduation Initiative 2025 Advisory Committee in Long Beach, twice
- Institute for Teaching and Learning Summer institute in Long Beach
- CSSA meeting in Long Beach
- American Association of University Professors (AAUP) Summer Institute in Portland, Oregon
- ASCSU Executive Committee retreat in Sacramento

August

- Tenure Density Task Force faculty representatives via Zoom
- Academic Council via Zoom
- Provost Onboarding via Zoom
- California Faculty Association (CFA) Board of Directors meeting in Sacramento
- CSSA in San Bernardino
- Graduation Initiative 2025 Symposium Proposal Review meeting via Zoom
- Joint Leadership Retreat in Long Beach (ASCSU, Chancellor and Cabinet, CSSA, Trustees)
- Systemwide Budget Advisory Committee in Long Beach
- Alumni Council in Northridge
- Graduation Initiative 2025 Task Force via Zoom

September

- Chico Campus Senate
- Elle Hoxworth (Legislative Assistant for Assembly Member Holden) in Sacramento
- Sacramento Campus Senate
- Jeanice Warden (Principal Consultant for the Assembly Committee on Higher Education) in Sacramento
- EVC Blanchard

Upcoming, prior to next plenary session

- Tenure Density Task Force meeting in Long Beach
- September Board of Trustees meeting in Long Beach
- Graduation Initiative 2025 Symposium in Long Beach
- AAUP Shared Governance Conference in Washington, D.C.
- Academic Council meeting in Long Beach
- Hearings on faculty diversity in San Jose
- San Bernardino Campus Senate
- Sonoma Campus Senate
- CFA Board of Director's meeting in Millbrae
- Agenda Setting meeting with Chancellor White in Long Beach
- Stanislaus Campus Senate
- Campus Senate Chair's meeting in Long Beach
- Fresno Campus Senate
- Channel Islands Campus Senate
- Cal Poly Pomona Campus Senate
- Bakersfield Campus Senate

Key Issues

Graduation Initiative 2025 and Symposium

Having nearly met or surpassed the goals of its first Graduation Initiative, in June the CSU embarked on a new effort to set goals and strategies for improving 4- and 6-year graduation rates for native students and 2- and 4-year rates for transfer students. Senators Ullman, Van Selst and I served on the Advisory Committee for this effort, along with 3 students, and two each of the following constituencies: trustees, presidents, provosts, vice presidents of student affairs, and assistant vice presidents for institutional research.

At its first two meetings, the group discussed research presented by Hans Johnson (Director of the Public Policy Institute of California's Higher Education Center) and Lande Ajose (Executive Director of California Competes), then began the process of reviewing methodology for benchmarking of campus and system graduation rates based upon comparison to other institutions. Refining the benchmarking process extended into the third meeting as well, because it is on the basis of comparison institutions that campus and system goals are established. Therefore, multiple methods were considered during the Advisory Committee's extensive deliberations regarding benchmarking.

The time frame for accomplishing the task of recalibrating the Graduation Initiative to set stretch goals to 2025 was ambitious, and rendered more urgent by a provision in the state budget requiring a system plan and campus plans for improving graduation rates to be adopted by the Board of Trustees and submitted to the Department of Finance by September 30, 2016. If this deadline is met, the CSU will receive an augmentation to this year's budget of \$35,000,000.

It is important to note that the \$35,000,000 is a one-time allocation, not an increase to the base budget of the CSU. At each Graduation Initiative Advisory Committee meeting, participants emphasized that one-time funding will *not* improve graduation rates over the long run. It will take additional resources, and lots of them, to have the sustained impact necessary to achieve the recalibrated graduation targets for the campuses and the system. Resources are particularly important when it comes to targeting specific groups, i.e., underrepresented, low-income and first-generation students, all of whom are referenced in the budget bill.

At the final meeting of the Advisory Committee, Executive Vice Chancellor Blanchard presented for our consideration and feedback a set of recommendations that are to be presented to the Board of Trustees. I frankly lost track of how many times the goals were called "audacious," and I would have to agree with that label. EVC Blanchard will be discussing the 2025 Graduation Initiative with the ASCSU, so more information about the entire effort will be presented at that time. I also encourage senators to watch the Board of Trustees meeting next week when even more detail will be presented.

After the Board meeting, a Graduation Initiative Symposium will take place wherein several campuses will showcase exemplars of student success efforts. These exemplars were chosen not because they represent "boutique" programs influencing small numbers of students, but because they have (or can have, with adequate resources) an impact at an all-campus level. The presenters will highlight data to show the success and fidelity of their approach, and those from other campuses can assess whether a similar approach could work for the students on their campus. Senators Van Selst, Ullman and I, along with the ASCSU Executive Committee, will attend this Symposium.

General Education

The past few weeks have been eventful on the GE front. First, I learned of questions raised at high levels about GE requirements which were confusing on a particular campus. The campus worked to resolve the situation, but in the meantime, Chancellor White requested a systemwide survey of GE requirements, which resulted in Coded Memorandum ASA-2016-19: *General Education Requirements Survey*. When I asked if the data and results of the survey were going to be shared with the Chancellor's General Education Advisory Committee (GEAC) or with ASCSU, I was told there were no plans to do so, that the sole purpose of the survey was to get a baseline understanding of GE curricula in the CSU. The survey, it was explained, will allow the Chancellor to see similarities and differences across campuses (e.g., some campuses are "being more innovative"), and therefore to understand *why* the curricula look different. I'm told concerns have also been raised about the size of GE programs, upper division GE, assessment of GE curricula, clarity of requirements listed on websites, and other issues as well. Clearly, the conversations about GE in various quarters have been robust, and thus it is hoped that the survey can provide data to the Chancellor on these and other matters related to general education.

Of course, it probably goes without saying, but I will say it anyway: just as the survey can provide data to the Chancellor, so, too, can it provide data to the faculty. General Education is a set of curricula, and curricula are the purview of the faculty. Asking a campus senate chair to sign a spreadsheet certifying that the information on a survey is accurate is an administrative act, it is not the involvement of faculty in curricular review, nor is it shared governance just because the provost also signs the same piece of paper. I confess to disappointment that neither ASCSU nor GEAC partnered with the Chancellor's Office on this survey when it was initiated, but at the Joint Leadership Retreat in August, the Executive Committee was assured by EVC Blanchard that ASCSU would be supplied with the raw campus data and would be involved if the results of the survey yield information worthy of follow-up. Moreover, in a conversation I had with EVC Blanchard late this afternoon (September 13, 2016), he reinforced his pledge that the information from the survey would be shared, and we discussed faculty taking the lead on analysis of the data and potential recommendations that might result. On behalf of faculty, I look forward to receiving this data, and I pledge that faculty stand ready at any time to engage curricular inquiries.

Last month I found out that there were curricular inquiries about GE on the legislative front too, but I discovered it only after the fact. Unbeknownst to ASCSU, *Assembly Concurrent Resolution Number 158—Relative to public postsecondary education (Holden)* raised questions about general education and transfer. In response, Coded Memorandum ASA-2016-18 (*Clarification of Policies on General Education Transfer*) was issued by EVC Blanchard, asking campuses to ensure that all CSU policies related to GE and transfer are being followed. In the meantime, Steven Filling, Tom Krabacher and I have had discussions with folks in Sacramento about ACR 158, and the Fiscal and Governmental Affairs Committee likely will have more to say about it at this plenary meeting. Again, whether the inquiries come from legislators or others, faculty welcome the opportunity to discuss our curricula, how it meets the needs of our students and the citizenry, and how we endeavor to ensure it attains the highest quality possible.

Task Forces

Quantitative Reasoning. Also to be discussed at this plenary is the work of the Quantitative Reasoning Task Force, which concluded its deliberations over the summer in the spirit of true shared governance. The Task Force came about as a result of a resolution from the statewide Senate and it's been chaired by Drs. Filling and Stevenson and drafted by members of the ASCSU. The outcome is that the Task Force reached agreement on four recommendations: 1) the need for an updated definition of quantitative reasoning, 2) the need to revise quantitative reasoning requirements in the CSU, 3) the need to adopt policies that advance quantitative reasoning skills, and 4) the need to create a CSU Center for Math Instruction. The overall purpose of the Task Force was to promote excellence in math education, and ASCSU will be asked to take action on the Final Report when the Executive Committee introduces a resolution on the matter this week. In addition, the CSU Math Council will consider the report at its meeting next month. GEAC discussed the report at its meeting today, and you will hear the outcome of their discussion when Chair Mary Ann Creadon presents her report at the plenary meeting.

Tenure Density. I had hoped that meetings of this task force could commence over the summer, but the non-faculty membership was not finalized until recently. However, in August the ASCSU and CFA faculty representatives met virtually to discuss the charge and the data required to fulfill it. The first meeting of the task force will take place next Monday (September 19, 2016). In addition, a legislative hearing on faculty diversity is slated to take place on October 6, 2016 at San Jose State University, and faculty representing ASCSU as well as CFA will participate.

Academic Freedom and Intellectual Property. Using the same model of engaging in discussion as was navigated with the Tenure Density Task Force, CFA Chair Jennifer Eagen and I proposed to EVC Blanchard that three faculty members each from ASCSU and CFA join with the Chancellor's Office to discuss drafts of policy revisions that have been generated on both academic freedom and intellectual property. EVC Blanchard noted today (September 13, 2016) that he could not honor our request for an academic freedom task force until CFA agrees that such discussions would satisfy bargaining obligations. Additionally, he indicated that recommended policy changes on intellectual property aren't ready for review, but should be in a few months. Academic freedom and intellectual property policies will remain a focal point of faculty interest, and until such time as systemwide discussion of these issues is possible, to me it seems reasonable to presume that campus discussions and actions will not be impeded, even if such discussions and actions will need to be revisited once systemwide efforts conclude.

Academic Conference

Late last week, I was informed that the venue for the Academic Conference (scheduled for February 9-10) must change. The Conference Planning Team is discussing how to adjust to these circumstances, and further information will be provided during our plenary meeting. Despite this challenge, I'm gratified that the event continues to be supported by Chancellor White and his staff, both in word and in deed.

ASCSU Priorities and Theme

Each of the chairs of ASCSU's standing committees, along with the Executive Committee, established priorities to guide their efforts during this academic year. Those priorities were shared at the Joint Leadership Retreat mentioned above, and I believe each of the committee chairs has also shared them with their committee, or will do so tomorrow. For its part, the Executive Committee articulated the following:

The Executive Committee of the Academic Senate of the California State University seeks to promote academic quality in the CSU by strengthening:

- Shared governance
- Faculty advocacy and governmental relations
- The ASCSU relationship with campus senates

In addition, the Executive Committee, after consultation with the chairs of the standing committees, established the following as a theme to guide the Academic Senate this year: "Finding the Balance." This theme recognizes the need to examine competing demands within the academy and tradeoffs that occur when one set of interests eclipses others. It also features the assumption of agency by the ASCSU, which puts us in a proactive rather than a reactive posture. I look forward to seeing how this Senate, each of its committees, and indeed each of its senators engages this theme as the academic year progresses.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine M. Miller