

## ASCSU Chair's Board of Trustees Meeting Report

Steven Filling  
September 9, 2015

1. Good morning all. Thank you Chair Monville, and most especially thank you for taking the time to come and visit with ASCSU last week. I think we had a good conversation. I know that you have a huge number of demands in your time, and we appreciate you taking that opportunity to speak with us.
2. The Academic Senate is the formal voice of the 24,000+ faculty of the CSU and one of the things we have been learning in recent years is that some of the conversation needs to be with the folks in Sacramento. Hence, some of our statements from last week speak to legislation.
  - a. AS-3222 expresses our support for SB 707 (Wolk) which prohibits concealed carry permit holders from carrying firearms to K-12 campuses and on to the University campuses. We are strongly in favor of maintaining a gun free environment in our learning environment. I think events of recent weeks make clear why.
  - b. AS 3232 expresses our gratitude to Senator Hancock and Assemblymember O'Donnell for their prompt and effective action in dealing with the problem related to the exit exams for high school seniors in 2015. We seriously appreciate their taking care of that issue.
  - c. On the same topic, AS 3224 proclaims our support for SB 172 (Liu) which suspends the high school exit exam for the years 15-16, 16-17 and 17-18 and which calls for the creation of an advisory panel to consider the feasibility of continued use of that exit exam and an exploration of alternative mechanisms.
  - d. And finally AS3230 instantiates a task force consisting of CSU and California Community College faculty and administrators to look at quantitative reasoning, which is one of the general education areas of focus. The proximate reason for doing so is that over the last four years community colleges have been running a pilot program, Statway, which seeks to provide developmental instruction in mathematics. Statway is an accelerated two semester course framed on statistics and that's in comparison to the traditional route which is three to four semesters of more general mathematics. At least initially it looks like Statway is successful. There are some concerns, however. One reason it's successful may be that it's pulled about three quarters of the algebra out of the courses. One of the things the mathematics folks asked us to do and agreed to work with us on is a review of what we think that quantitative reasoning is, whether algebra needs to be there or whether what students are getting now is sufficient and we will be proceeding with that.

3. I am sorry the trees came down because truthfully when I walked into the room I felt I had entered the fabled forest of JRR Tolkein's Elves, Lothlórien, which had a nice harmonic for me since that forest exemplified the Elven esthetics of sustainability, of preservation. I think we have something very seriously worth preservation here. You've heard talk about sustainability in a variety of venues in the last couple of days. I will note that I'm part of a task force the Chancellor convened last year to work on financial sustainability. I believe the report from that group will be surfacing at perhaps the November meeting. It's in the consultation process right now and I would direct your attention to an editorial in the Sac Bee yesterday by one of our more thoughtful Senators, Senator Gubernat from East Bay. The editorial asks what the role of the State is in the provision of public goods. And what is our role in encouraging the state to continue to meet it's responsibilities. It's certainly true we can pursue a wide variety of alternative venues to find money, but it's also true that maybe the state needs to do its job of funding public goods.

I think that public private partnerships can certainly work for some things but I think we also should acknowledge there are issues with them. I confess to a bit of disquiet that sometimes it seems as if we're looking to the UC and saying, "What did you guys do? We're going to do that too." I think we're very different institutions and I'm not sure that the analgesics used by the UC are effective for the CSU.

4. You also heard about academic sustainability. We had quite a conversation about metrics. Trustee Taylor noted that applying metrics across the campuses is probably a good idea because there are a lot of similarities across the CSU. Academic Senate Chair Filling would note also that there are a lot of differences across the CSU and those differences are what makes us the world class institution that we are. I think context matters. The context for San Louis Obispo, as President Armstrong will be very happy to tell you, is that it is one of the most over-subscribed institutions in the west. The context of my own campus, Stanislaus, as President Sheley will tell you is a bit different. Not that either one of the institutions is any better or worse than the other. They are both meeting our primary mission of educating the people of California. They just meet it in different ways.

I encourage the Trustees to visit the campuses. I know that the Presidents would joyfully welcome you. I know that the faculty, staff and students of the campuses would dearly love to share their lived existence with you and to help you appreciate the vast differences across the campuses.

I will note also that labels matter - referring to some campuses based on a set of metrics as slackers or laggards I think seriously misses the point. Our goal is not to maximize the metrics - our goal is educating the citizens of California. Our goal is not to offer the most online classes. Our goal is not to have the most accelerated developmental instruction. It is to do what works for our students, and I think we need to be very clear that metrics tell us a little bit about the path, but they are not the path. Our goal is education. I would like us to remain true to that goal.

Chair Monville that concludes my report.