

Report from the Academic Senate of the CSU

ASCSU Plenary Meeting, March 17-18, 2022

Senators H. Riggio & K. Bezdecny

The ASCSU met in plenary session over Zoom on March 17-18, 2022. The main topics of conversation overall during the meeting were continuing challenges caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Assembly Bill 928 that requires a common General Education pathway for transfer from the Community Colleges to the CSU and the UC, the resignation of Chancellor Castro and circumstances surrounding it, and the upcoming season for advocacy for the CSU budget and other state bills that involve the CSU. Resolutions were passed and many first-reading items were discussed (see below).

1) COVID-19 concerns

The various CSU campuses have different policies and requirements for returning to campus (although vaccinations and boosters are required systemwide). Mask requirements are being loosened across the system (thankfully not here at Cal State LA). The system is hoping for full return to in-person instruction by Fall, 2022, given decreasing rates of COVID-19 infection and increasing vaccination rates.

2) Assembly Bill 928

AB 928 is the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act Act of 2021: Associate Degree for Transfer Intersegmental Implementation Committee) – a single General Education (GE) pathway will be created for students, composed of 34 units total, for Community College (CC) students into the CSU and UC. The three systems (CC, CSU, UC) must agree on the pathway, which will be finalized by 2023, in place by Fall 2025. Any changes to GE cannot occur without consultation with ASCSU.

3) Castro Resignation etc.

The Board of Trustees (BOT) will meet to appoint an Interim Chancellor on Monday, 3/21/2022. This person will serve 12-16 months while there is a search for a new Chancellor. The BOT will likely vote to eliminate SAT and ACT scores as an admission requirement to the CSU. Although the Executive Vice Chancellor for Human Resources and a Trustee visited with us, they did not provide any additional information about the Castro resignation and associated outrage the executive compensation he is receiving upon resignation (full salary plus housing allowance for a year in a “Consultant” role to the CSU). The ASCSU expressed largely negative sentiment toward this situation.

4) Budget advocacy and state bills

Spring is the season for budget advocacy as we wait for the Governor's revised budget in May. There are several bills moving through the State Legislature that concern the CSU, including those involving funding for student programs, revision of campus policies, establishing mental health hotlines on each campus, establishing crisis response teams on each campus, support for parenting leave, and revision of Cal Grant policies.

5) Visitors

Jeff Gold, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Success: Introduced a new dashboard program that allows each CSU faculty person to access information about student pass/DFW rates and equity gaps (differences in grades and pass rates based on race/ethnicity, gender, first-generation status, Pell grant receipt) across the system and within each campus. Faculty can view such statistics for their own classes, information that is confidential and that cannot be used in personnel decision but serves to inform faculty. Steps to ameliorate equity gaps are also provided in the program.

California Faculty Association: CFA currently has working groups with the Chancellor's Office to discuss 5-year contracts for lecturers and professors of practice, and on supporting parenting among faculty to a greater degree (especially providing one full academic term of paid parental leave). The first 4% General Salary Increase we received in our new Contract should come in April 2022, including retroactive monies (the 4% is retroactive to July, 2021) and COVID pay (\$3500.00). Some faculty are eligible for post-promotion increases as well. The second 4% GSI is expected to be supported by the budget, and should be in the July 1, 2022 check.

California State Student Association (CSSA)

The CSSA representative reported on a Resolution on Title IX and protecting faculty, students, and staff in CSU. CSSA is focusing on student well-being, remaining focused on student well-being and shared governance, and getting all the information they can get regarding Chancellor's Office operations, trying to get a handle on the SJSU and Fresno State scandals. Students are participating in the development of the GE pathway as per AB 928.

6) Resolutions

The ASCSU passed several resolutions and discussed several others (including on cultural taxation of faculty, mental health support for CSU faculty, establishing Ombudsperson positions on each campus, executive search processes, victim advocacy in the CSU, and others that will return as second-reading items in May, 2022).

Passed resolutions are:

AS-3525-22: Request for Review of the Fiscal Impact of any Proposed California Community College Baccalaureate Programs

AS-3526-22: Involving California State University (CSU) Faculty in the Approval Process for California Community College Four-year Baccalaureate Programs

AS-3527-22: Endorsement of the California State Student Association (CSSA) Resolution Calling for the CSU to Include Caste in Anti-Discriminatory Policy

AS-3529-22: 2022 Legislative Advocacy Positions of the Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU)

AS-3530-22: Recommendation for a Singular General Education Transfer Pathway

AS-3532-22: Eliminating the Use of the SAT and ACT for CSU Admissions Decisions

AS-3539-22: Call for an Independent Investigation into the Actions Taken by Former CSU Chancellor Castro While President of CSU Fresno

AS-3543-22: Condemnation of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine