

Academic Senate  
(530) 898-6201, Zip 020

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## MEMORANDUM

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### ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES Thursday, October 23, 2014, 2:30 p.m., K-207/209

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**PRESENT:** Baumgartner, Boyd, Cross, Crotts, Donoho, Ellingson, Ford, Gray, Heileson, Herren, Hoffman, Janos, Kaiser, Kipnis, Kirchhoff, Lee, Livingston, Mace, McCabe, McConkey (Boyd), Meadows, Mills, Nichols, Ponarul (Donoho), Pratt, Ratekin, Roll (Thompson), Rowberg, Schierenbeck, Schindler, Schulte, Seipel, Selvester, Sistrunk, Thompson, Tinkler, Traver

**ABSENT:** Calendrella, Elrod, Smits, Zingg

1. Approve Agenda.

The agenda was approved.

2. The CSU, Chico Campus Climate Questionnaire Results Report – Discussion – (Selvester, Linville, Allen).

Selvester began the meeting by noting:

**Constitution of the Academic Senate**  
Article II. Duties and Responsibilities  
Section 2.

The duties of the Academic Senate as delegated to it by the Faculty shall be:

1. To formulate, recommend, review, and revise all academic, personnel, and professional policies, including fiscal policies related thereto, broadly and liberally defined.
2. To assure through well-established and well-defined channels of communication the maximum cooperation among all members of the university, in order that policy and administrative implementation shall be consonant.

“Today, we are suspending other work to prioritize a special a special Senate meeting with an agenda dedicated to the results of the Campus Climate Questionnaire. I hope this decision sends a clear message to everyone at this institution that the context, climate, and conditions under which we work are of paramount importance. The motivation that drove the development of the simple questionnaire was to find out two things”:

*How are we doing?*

*How do we feel?*

We need to explore these issues collegially, civilly, and collaboratively.

“Today we have an opportunity to examine what the questionnaire reveals and to discuss our questions, impressions, and the meaning it has for us. Although we will not use this meeting to decide specific steps forward, we can discuss how this data informs an approach to going forward.”

Selvester briefly reviewed some foundations of civil discourse. “There is a pressing need to change the tenor of public debate from shouts and slurs to something more reasoned and effective.” We “must work to be the site of social transformation.”

The purpose of the survey (i.e., questionnaire) distributed in late spring, 2014, is to guide the development of a comprehensive “climate survey” for spring, 2015 and annually thereafter. The quantitative data measured results from three questions: Q1- How well does the university support your ability to work effectively in your assigned role? Q2- How well does the university support your efforts to facilitate student learning and success? Q3- How well does the university maintain a satisfactory general work environment? Results were reported in 15 graphs and associated tables. The qualitative data was reported in 187 pages of response. Results were aggregated for 4 categories of respondents: administration, staff, tenure track/tenured faculty, and temporary faculty.

The following themes emerged and a brief narrative was provided for each: growth opportunities, physical work environment, quantity and quality of work, salary, job satisfaction, collaboration, community connection, technology, policies and procedures, service/teaching/research, and leadership. The latter theme included subcategories on dissemination of communication, receptivity to communication, and shared governance.

Selvester noted that we will proceed by looking at the data first, then “follow-up by discussing what we see.”

Kaiser noted that the absence of administrators in attendance should “not be taken as a negative.” She sees it as a “statement of faith”—faith that we can consider a set of circumstances and arrive at meaningful conclusions. “I don’t think we need them to move forward.” We have been asked by the Chancellor to analyze the data and “do all the research that we can.” We have the data to move forward. From the outcomes of our discussion, we will get ideas of what needs to be done next. “And I think you all for being here.”

Selvester outlined the history of activities that led to where we are today. At the Academic Senate on April 03, 2014, a discussion was held under “Other” on morale on campus. Subsequently, the Executive Committee drafted a set of questions for a Campus Climate Questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire is to guide the development of a comprehensive “climate survey” for spring, 2015 and annually thereafter. On May 09, the questionnaire was distributed to some 2000 people. The questionnaire closed on May 23. “We got a good return.” 401 paper responses were received. The qualitative data received generated 187 pages. We wanted to generate quantitative and qualitative data; “because sometimes numbers just don’t tell the whole story.” Bill Allen, Director of Institutional Research, manipulated the data. Sandy Linville, Assistant Director for the Center of Economic Development, synthesized the qualitative data.

Selvester noted that the survey that will be developed and administered in spring and annually thereafter will not at all be limited to the questions in this survey. There are several higher education organizations that conduct surveys along these lines. We will look at their surveys and look at what others institutions have done with survey data.

Selvester noted the themes that emerged from the data, and called attention to the *Associated words/terms* that accompanied the themes. These terms in their own way can be revealing of how faculty perceive their working environment.

## Themes

**Growth opportunities.** Respondents noted the desire for increased professional development opportunities. Respondents noted several campus programs as a strength of the campus: TLP, CELT, and Lynda.com. While many respondents noted that sufficient trainings are available on campus, many reported they do not have enough time away from their job duties to participate in trainings. Respondents desired mentors and desired cross training both within departments and across departments. The desire for mentors was the most salient set to emerge from the data related to professional growth.

**Physical work environment.** There was a balance between respondents feeling their physical work environment was satisfactory and feeling their physical work environment was inadequate. Some respondents reported having quality equipment and space (i.e., computers, ergonomic desks, offices) and others reported having outdated equipment (i.e., computers), and dirty classrooms and offices. The beauty of the campus was the one area most mentioned positively on the how well the university maintained a satisfactory general work environment (3a). Respondents noted facility maintenance requests were not responded to in an adequate and timely manner and were a source of frustration.

*Associated words/terms:* filthy, well-maintained, outdated, smart classrooms, beautiful, proud/pride, peaceful

**Quantity and quality of work.** There is interplay between quantity of work, quality of work, and job satisfaction in that each informs the other and is not mutually exclusive of each other. The quantity of work affects the quality of work, which in turn affects reported job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has been separated into a separate theme in this analysis due to the abundance of respondents noting they desired to increase the quality of their work. This desire is mediated by feelings of appreciation and respect from both supervisions and colleagues.

There is a perception that faculty and staff are overworked due to people leaving positions and not being replaced. As a result, respondents (faculty and staff) have noted the quality of their work has decreased significantly. Some respondents noted they did not know what their job entailed as they have taken on duties of vacated positions, yet others reported having a clear job description. Respondents noted having "multiple hats" and "multiple roles" and not know which job role was most important. Respondents noted they feel like they do not have enough time to complete their work. They noted working through lunches and break time in order to complete their job duties.

Faculty has noted that both class load and class size has led to a decrease in the quality of instruction, and ultimately a decrease in job satisfaction. Temporary faculty have noted not having enough notification of what classes they would be teaching in order to adequately prepare, which has led a decrease in the quality of instruction.

*Associated words/terms:* Sherpa, beasts of burden, weary, over-burdened, overwhelmed, keeping my head above water, surviving, doing the bare minimum, oppressive, abusive.

**Salary.** There is a perceived inequality with respect to salaries in three categories: 1) respondents noted a gap between the amount of work they do and their pay level. The amount of work they do has increased over the past 5-8 years, while their pay has remained stagnant (inversion/compression was

mentioned with frequency). 2) There is a perceived inequity in what CSU, Chico pays as compared to other CSUs. Respondents mentioned being paid at the bottom of all CSUs. 3) There is a perceived injustice in salary between senior administration and faculty/staff. There is perception of injustice as a result of employees in B&F receiving raises and/or bonuses while faculty and staff have not received meaningful raises in 5+ years.

**Job satisfaction.** Again, job satisfaction is intertwined with the quantity of work, but was also linked to feelings of appreciation, recognition and respect. Thus, job satisfaction was separated into a theme to be measured in an annual climate survey. Respondents reported the yearly staff luncheon is appreciated as well as other recognition programs.

*Associated words/terms:* dehumanizing, demoralizing, hopeless, dishearten, disposable, sad, stressful, fearful.

**Collaboration.** The desire to collaborate with others on campus was a salient theme that emerged in the data. Respondents reported a feeling of working in silos and isolation within their departments with a desire to collaborate with other departments and/or colleges.

Respondents noted the desire to have an informal space (e.g., faculty dining area) to get to know other faculty and collaborate. The informal space was also desired in order to help create a sense of campus community and as a mechanism for increased communication opportunities (e.g., bulletin boards).

*Associated words/terms:* isolation, silo, competition between departments/colleges for resources.

**Community connection.** There is a perception that the interpretation of EO1000 is unmerited and has caused isolation with the community within the service area. Additionally, the perceived interpretation of EO1000 has created a separation between campus and students resulting in a loss of a sense of campus community. Access to facilities during campus hours is burdensome and reservation requests are not responded to in a timely manner. Access to facilities by both faculty and students is too restrictive and costly after hours. This has perpetuated a perception that administration cares more about saving money than ensuring student success.

*Associated words/terms:* isolation, community, connection, corruption, student-centered.

**Technology.** Respondents reported an appreciation of the technical resources available to them. TLP was the one resource that was widely acknowledged as beneficial to both the work environment and support for student success. Respondents also noted the desire for additional technical resources such as updated computers and smart classrooms.

**Policies and procedures.** One of the themes that emerged from the data was the growth in the number of policies and procedures in the past 5+ years. Respondents noted new policies and procedures have created an administrative burden that has taken them away from being able to do an effective job. Respondents noted a lack of understanding of how the creation of reports and other administrative policies are used to benefit the campus or student learning. Respondents noted many of the policies and procedures were too restrictive, redundant and were unclear in purpose. Respondents noted they did not know why the new policies and procedures were in effect. They were just told to *just do it*, which led to a feeling of frustration and resentment. Additionally, respondents noted the lack of input into the decision making process of new policies and procedures. Two policies specifically mentioned were new travel policies and use of facilities.

*Associated words/terms:* Aside from "low morale," the term "bureaucracy" was the most frequent term to emerge from the data. Additional associated words include: dictatorship, regime, overbearing, administrative, busywork, burdensome, redundant, nonsense.

**Service/teaching/research.** The teacher-scholar identity was important to both tenured, tenure track and non-tenure track faculty. The ability to conduct and report on research was a major theme that emerged from the data. Some respondents reported an unclear understanding of the expectation between time spent teaching and time spent doing research. Are they expected to be quality teachers or quality researchers? At this point in time, respondents noted the expectations of teaching and researching were mutually exclusive; they either devoted attention to teaching or devoted attention to research; they could not do both effectively or the mission of the university was either teaching or researching. Respondents noted they were expected to do research but not given support to conduct research (i.e., release time, funding to conduct research and funding to present at conferences). Additionally, respondents noted RESP was sluggish and inefficient in processing and managing research grants. Respondents also reported RESP indirect rates are too high for research proposals to remain competitive or for research to be conducted effectively (i.e., not enough funds for direct costs). Respondents also noted internal grants and summer scholarship awards were appreciated and encouraged to provide additional support for such initiatives.

**Leadership.** The data suggests that faculty and staff perceive a disconnection with senior administration. There is a perception that faculty and staff do not understand the direction of the university and the senior administration is detached from faculty and staff's wants and needs. Three sub-themes emerged in conjunction with the perceived detachment: the quantity and quality of communication disseminated, receptivity to communication and shared governance.

***Dissemination of communication: quantity and quality.*** There were notable responses indicating respondents wanted more communication from senior administration and for an increase in the quality of communication received.

*Associated words/terms:* honesty, closed, secrecy, cabal, greedy, favoritism, direction, mission

***Receptivity to communication.*** Respondents have noted a fear of retribution in voicing concerns or providing feedback to their supervisors or other administrators. The term(s) "bully", "bullied" "bullying" and "harassment" was the most repeated descriptor in the data relating to receptivity to communication.

***Shared governance.*** This subtheme emerged from respondents' wishes to be included in decision-making in areas that they are intricately involved (i.e., their departments or areas of work). Respondents noted changes in policies and procedures negatively impacted their workflow and requested involvement as indicated above under the theme of policies and procedures.

*Associated words/terms:* elite, hierarchical, detached, intrusive, cabal, favoritism, unethical

Overall, the data shows that people are not highly satisfied. "A majority of respondents feel that the *best* we are doing is "somewhat." "In the full sample, seventy-four percent of the respondents indicate that the university ranges from being unable ("Not at All") to maintain a satisfactory general work environment, to being barely able ("Very Little") or mildly able ("Somewhat") to maintain a satisfactory general work environment." Concerns were noted over confidentiality—"is it *truly* confidential"—in responding to the survey and the effect that may have on response rates. The "associated words/terms" that cropped up under categories in the survey pointedly convey faculty senses of frustration and dismay over a broad range of concerns.

A “culture of fear” exists among faculty to some extent. Faculty “want to feel appreciated.” They desire to “do quality work but just can’t.” “Faculty feel adrift.” There is a “want for collaboration.” Linville emphasized that feedback indicated, “There is interplay between quantity of work, quality of work, and job satisfaction in that each informs the other and is not mutually exclusive of each other. The quantity of work affects the quality of work, which in turn affects reported job satisfaction.”

All agreed that “this is serious stuff.” “The data is very revealing and dramatic.” “We do need to pay attention when the dog is barking at something real.” “This is an actual fire, not just an ag burn.” We have generated much good data, “but it may represent a lot of people in trouble.” “We need to move here.” *It’s not just data; it’s human beings.* “There is an emotional climate here.” It’s not just how we feel about work; but how we feel about “trust and happiness.” It’s affecting us at all levels. A poignant plea for change was heard from a lecturer who feels that, had he/she not been driven into a quagmire of “senseless and conflicting” circumstances, he/she might have been able to possibly play some intervening role in preventing a student from (very) recently committing suicide. An associate professor spoke of coming “this close” to pulling the trigger of a gun to the head as he/she despaired over a down-spiraling environment where trust, truth, and collegiality seemed to have bottomed out. A guest staff member noted the economic plight of low paid staff who cannot pay bills. “It is frustrating and it is demoralizing.” There is equity issues across all ranges of employment, but “right now the real need for equity is at the bottom.” Other faculty shared experiences that senators received as “very moving and meaningful.”

Senators noted the need to move ahead now regarding these issues. “Identify concrete things now and who to go to.” “We need to move here.” “We should identify a third party person for people to go to.” “People want to see action on some things now.” Selvester noted that “we’re not waiting on a survey to act.” “We need to keep discussions “local at first” and then bring in an outside independent consultant. We are in the phase of building groundwork to provide a meaningful context for a consultant to reflect upon. Selvester noted that, based on the Chancellor’s reference to the Questionnaire in his response to the Resolution, Request for Review of and Assistance in Strengthening Campus Shared Governance, Communication, and Morale, our responses to the Questionnaire and the Resolution will inevitably merge to a large extent. The Chico Senate differs from most other campuses in that we have all stakeholders—students, staff, and faculty—at the table and all voting. And together with you people in the gallery, we have a “grand theater.” This gives “more depth and meaning to what we are looking at.” “It matters to know how all this works because we are all colleagues—students, faculty, staff, and administrators.” “We’re all in this together.” It’s really important that you all come here and express your opinion about how we’re doing and how we can do it better.

Selvester noted, “I understand there is urgency. I feel the same way.” However, it is an amazing thing how a bureaucracy does not move as fast as we would like it to. “We are endeavoring.” But we will proceed carefully within the context of shared governance and rely heavily upon the role of consultation. I hope you will carry the message that we are moving forward and we are spending our time and our talk to “focus on the stuff that matters.” “And right now, this is what matters.” We are in the process of on-boarding a new interim Provost. We will discuss today’s Senate meeting at the full Executive Committee tomorrow. We will develop a multilevel plan ASAP and report back at the next Academic Senate meeting.

### 3. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joe Crofts, Secretary