

Hey Cal Poly Humboldt!

Happy Spring Semester! I hope y'all are well, that you had some restorative time to engage with the people and activities you love, and that your respective gigs are starting smoothly. I missed y'all.

As I've mentioned (incessantly, to anyone who'll listen), this is my last semester serving in the role of Senate Chair and General Faculty President. As such, I have been reflecting on what we've accomplished during my tenure, and what I wish we could still make happen in the brief remainder.

Briefly, we have 8 senate meetings remaining prior to the end of the Spring Semester; just 8 meetings with which we can affect institutional policy change prior to the installation of a new University President. I don't want to insinuate preemptively here that the incoming President won't be a just and righteous leader for our campus, but, as has been stated by a number of folx, writing thoughtful policy and guidelines that set out our community's expectations and norms can help to overtly guide that leadership.

Normally, I think of the Senate Chair role as being a multi partial facilitator of shared governance practices on campus, and thus generally opt to help shepherd policy creation rather than direct it, but we are facing a time crunch and the stakes are high, so I'm going to suggest some things that could help, in hopes of getting the proverbial ball rolling. Feel free to ignore or admonish as y'all see fit:

1. **360 Administrative Climate Surveys:** Many of y'all likely heard about Dean Jeff Crane's voluntary Climate Survey for his leadership role at the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences conducted in Fall '24. I remember thinking when I heard it was going to happen that it was an act of bravery and trust from Dean Crane. After thinking about it more, I think such assessment needs to be a consistent and continuous norm for all administrative personnel on campus. We preach the expectation of assessment in our K-16 schools, in our curricular models, in our RTP processes, and then we celebrate the importance of assessment to ensure that our practices are working, but do not require climate surveys of our leadership. That doesn't make sense. Self-reflection is healthy. I can see why this might be scary; people sometimes say mean things in anonymous contexts, and that hurts. Further, such surveys might have implications related to employment (more to come on that next). But the Administrative Constituency needs to have evidence of what people think of their practices. If we operate in a void, without feedback or input, we risk making harmful, misinformed assumptions about the expectations of our community.
2. **Tenured/Student Representation on All Committees:** A recurring concern I have heard in numerous contexts over the last few months is the danger of making materially impactful decisions in a room full solely of at-will employees and their bosses. Frankly, when people are worried that they might lose their employment if they say or do the "wrong" thing, that reality is bound to factor into decision-making. No matter how purely

ethical we hope to be in our jobs, if there is a possibility we will have to move, relocate our kids' schools, or suffer financial impacts depending on what we say, that can have a chilling effect on speech and subsequent action. As such, I would suggest that we make sure that there is a tenured employee or student representative in every decision-making context on campus. I can envision arguments that others will have against this suggestion, but it is the only way I can think of to subvert this dynamic. We need folks who are structurally protected in relation to their careers to be there to speak up.

3. **ODEI Leadership in the Executive Cabinet:** This one is short: I think we need DEI considerations voiced consistently in the Executive Cabinet. Our contemporary context requires such perspective and input constantly.
4. **Development of Inclusive, Institutional Self Assessment Structures for On Campus Incidents:** I'm stealing this one directly from the [Review of the Eureka Police Department's Response to Protests in April](#). We should "*develop a formal critical or major incident review process that involves a meeting of Department leaders convened after a critical incident, in which a broad range of issues are considered and identified, and which results in clearly defined and documented action items with expectations for follow-up and effective feedback.*" We shouldn't have to request an investigation of things that happen on our campus and await a response that may never come; we should have a structure in place for conducting inquiries ourselves. We have smart, thoughtful, critical people across our campus, with appropriate subject matter knowledge and experience, and I'm fairly confident we could and should do this.

Ok. Those are my low hanging fruit examples. I've got others, but I think I am probably pushing the parameters of my gig as it is.

In a final note, we will have representatives of our burgeoning Dreamer Center at our Senate Meeting tomorrow to discuss resources and guidelines for supporting our Dreamer Students. Please keep an eye and ear out for that content. Protecting the safety and wellbeing of our students, inclusive of their educational opportunities and futures is the paramount shared responsibility of educators. Let's make sure we are all informed and duly prepared to do just that.

Peace,  
jim