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ASCSU Chair's Report
March 2019
Catherine Nelson

Welcome to the March 2019 ASCSU Plenary! This report highlights select events since my last reports at our January Plenary and February Interim meetings.

Trustee Visits

I am sorry to report that Board of Trustees Vice Chair Lillian Kimbell has to cancel her visit with us this week. She promises to reschedule soon.

Advocacy

We are at the beginning of a new two-year legislative session so much of the conversation in meetings the last month or so has been around advocacy efforts.

The Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS) Legislative Day was February 20. We met with Assemblymembers Marc Berman, Jose Medina and Shirley Weber and Senator Steve Glazer. We also met with Janice Warden, the well respected Chief Consultant for the Assembly Higher Education Committee and Mark Martin, Principal Consultant to Assemblymember Kevin McCarty and to the Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2 on Education Finance. Everyone agreed that Governor Newsom's January budget was good for higher education, especially for the CSU. Other major topics of discussion included financial aid reform, deferred maintenance, faculty diversity and CPEC 2.0 (a new agency to replace the old California Postsecondary Education Commission). There was also conversation with Assemblymember Weber about her ethnic studies bill (AB 1460) that would require every CSU student to take a 3 unit Ethnic Studies course as a graduation requirement. Assemblymember Berman has asked the Assembly Speaker to reconstitute the Special Committee on the Master Plan. The next phase of the committee's work would be to create a working group to identify California's higher education 2030 goals, including transfer rates, grad rates and the like. Representatives from all sectors would be asked to participate. Senator Glazer is sponsoring SB 2 that would create a statewide longitudinal database to develop substantive data about student access, progress and completion across higher education segments in California. His companion bill (with Assemblymember Allen) SB 3 would create the California Office of Higher Education Coordination, Accountability and Performance to develop the database and monitor institutional performance throughout the state. ICAS members expressed the hope that in order to maintain institutional flexibility and autonomy and faculty authority over the curriculum the new agency would

be more about monitoring developments in higher education for information purposes rather than about strict accountability.

The CSU had its annual California Advocacy Day on March 6. I joined Chancellor White and Trustee Hinton for visits to Speaker Anthony Rendon, Senate Pro Tempore Toni Atkins and Assemblymembers Phil Ting and Kevin McCarty. We emphasized our appreciation for Governor Newsom's budget and the CSU's willingness to admit and serve more students should the legislature fully fund the Trustees' request for 5% enrollment growth and \$75m for the Graduation Initiative. It was a good opportunity to follow ASCSU resolutions and point out that the conversation needs to go beyond graduation rates, time to degree and workforce preparation to include a point that often gets lost: hiring more track faculty is crucial to maintain academic quality and build strong student/faculty relationships proven to aid in retention and graduation. It was also an opportune time to talk about the salary levels needed to recruit and retain qualified faculty and highlight the important contributions CSU lecturers make to our students and academic programs. Chancellor White also discussed the CSU's deferred maintenance needs and sponsorship of SB 14 (Glazer/Allen) the Higher Education Facilities Bond Act of 2020 that puts an \$8 billion general obligation bond on the 2020 ballot (to be split evenly between the CSU and UC). Members Ting and McCarty both expressed concern that the number of CSU eligible students turned away from the CSU has not been reduced over the last few years despite additional resources from the state for enrollment growth. Member Ting also suggested that CSU efforts to increase faculty diversity have been insufficient.

There are two bills back this year after their lack of success in the last session. SB 24 (Leyva) would require the Commission on the Status of Women and Girls to collect private funds to distribute \$200,000 grants to public university health centers for medication abortion readiness. CSU and UC campus health centers would be required to offer abortion by medication to their students by January 2023. SB 660 (Pan) would require all higher education institutions to have a ratio of one mental health counselor for every 1,500 students. One other interesting bill is AB 930 (Gloria) that would prohibit the CSU Board of Trustees from considering increasing executive compensation in a year when student fees have increased. There are also quite a few bills on financial aid and reform and student well being. Our Fiscal and Governmental Affairs colleagues are hard at work developing the ASCSU legislative agenda for this session. The March State Legislative Update report to the Board of Trustees can be found at <https://www2.calstate.edu/csu-system/board-of-trustees/past-meetings/2019/Documents/mar-18-20-gov-rel.pdf>

GE Task Force Report

The GE Task Force Report continues to generate quite the reaction throughout the system. Reaction to the substance of the report varies, some of it positive and some not so much. In terms of timing and process the most common underlying themes I've heard are 1) the timing of the report is terrible but here it is so we need to address it in one way or another; 2) we need sufficient time to digest and reflect upon the report; and 3) we all need to make sure that shared governance works the way it should on this one. To those

ends, the Executive Committee is suggesting a process that allows for maximum participation and transparency. At the plenary this week we will introduce a first reading resolution to receive the report, formally refer it to AA and APEP, invite online feedback from colleagues throughout the system and recommend a timeline for consultation and ASCSU consideration as the next academic year arrives. As with any resolution, the body has the final say. As I write the Extended Executive Committee is piloting the online feedback mechanism that includes a survey and the opportunity to submit documents for posting such as resolutions, letters, white papers and the like. Anyone that wants to will be able to provide feedback and all feedback will be public. There will be a link on the ASCSU website to an information page that explains the feedback process and next steps. With luck we'll be ready to go live before the week is out. Of course formal communication such as resolutions, letters etc. can (and should) be forwarded to me at any time for distribution; we recommend that they be submitted for posting as well. I've forwarded resolutions and other communication I've already received to the ASCSU list and will continue to do so.

Other Activities

I met with Brett Christie, CSU Director of Quality Learning and Teaching for an update on the CSU Supplemental Instruction program. I also attended campus senate meetings at Fresno and Stanislaus, the annual California AAUP Conference and the February CFA Board of Directors meeting. Vice Chair Collins represented the ASCSU at the January and February CSSA Board of Directors meetings, Senator Soni will represent us at the March Alumni Council meeting and Senator Ullman will join me at the March Board of Trustees meeting. Other upcoming March/April meetings include the Revenue Opportunities Task Force, Committee on Academic Technology and Online Education (CATOE), ICAS, the Academic Council, the CFA Spring Assembly, the April CSSA meeting, ERFSA, our April Interims, CSU Hill Day in Washington D.C. and hopefully more visits with campus senates.

In conclusion, I'd like to thank our Fresno and Stanislaus colleagues for their hospitality. My visits were enjoyable and informative. Be sure and ask Senator Jenkins for his grand tour of the Fresno campus the next time you're in the area. Thanks also to the Executive Committee for their ongoing efforts and to the many colleagues who have shared their perspective on the GE Task Force Report. As I learned yet again on my visits this month, I am in awe of what faculty make happen every single day in the CSU. Despite all the challenges we face we remain committed to academic quality, shared governance and reaching out to students from underserved populations to bring them the benefits of public higher education. Not to put too fine a point on it, we are amazing.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Nelson