

Academic Senates' Reports to the LRCCD Board of Trustees Respectfully submitted by the Academic Senate Presidents April 14, 2021 (ConferZoom)

District Academic Senate (DAS) President, Julie Oliver, Reports:

- Recent announcements for centralization of Financial Aid (FA) and Admissions and Records (A&R) and for improved services for research, IT, and outreach are concerning. The DAS Leadership expects to create a plan in the coming weeks with the Chancellor and Deputy Chancellor to engage appropriate faculty from across all the colleges in each of these discussions as they move forward. Faculty have a unique perspective on all these areas and best practices to serve our students most effectively; therefore, it is critical for faculty to be actively engaged in all discussions moving forward. The DAS implores the LRCCD Board of Trustees to ensure such engagement occurs immediately in order to achieve early and meaningful collegial consultation and dialog moving forward.
- On April 6th the DAS passed the resolution "Impact of Class Size on Instructor Ability to Engage as Equitable Practitioners". The DAS Leadership will be working with the Chancellor and Deputy Chancellor on moving forward with the recommended task group charged with developing "recommendations for establishing a standing governance body whose purpose shall be to set guidelines for determining optimum class sizes" [Full text of the resolution may be found at the end of this report]
- At the April 20th DAS meeting a resolution from the Los Rios Ethnic Studies Faculty Council will be considered as a second reading. The resolution requests the formation of Ethnic Studies Departments at all the colleges and the hiring of full-time tenure-track Ethnic Studies faculty at all the colleges.
- At the request of the DAS a comprehensive student survey was developed to gauge the interests and concerns of students as we return to on-ground learning and services. The Los Rios Office of Institutional Research launched the survey this week.

For additional information about academic senate activities at the district, college, or local level please use the following links:

- [District Academic Senate \(DAS\)](#)
- [ARC Academic Senate](#)
- [CRC Academic Senate](#)
- [FLC Academic Senate](#)
- [SCC Academic Senate](#)
- [Academic Senate of California Community Colleges \(ASCCC\)](#)

California Title 5 §53200 "10+1" 1. Curriculum, including establishing prerequisites 2. Degree and certificate requirements 3. Grading policies 4. Educational program development 5. Standards or policies regarding student preparation and success 6. College governance structures, as related to faculty roles 7. Faculty roles and involvement in the accreditation process 8. Policies for faculty professional development activities 9. Processes for program review 10. Processes for institutional planning and budget development 11. Other academic and professional matters as mutually agreed upon.

Los Rios Community College District Academic Senate Resolution Impact of Class Size on Instructor Ability to Engage as Equitable Practitioners

Approved April 6, 2021

Whereas, the District Academic Senate (DAS) is committed to all the colleges becoming more equitable institutions, and equitable education requires building relationships with students and providing individualized learning experiences to meet diverse needs; and

Whereas, quality learning experiences and effective teaching strategies in online and face-to-face classes require active and interactive learning opportunities and multiple, diverse measures for assessing student learning; and

Whereas, there is a relationship between class size and/or instructor:student ratio and instructor ability to implement these best practices in equitable, effective and quality education; and

Whereas, despite Los Rios Community College District (LRCCD) Regulation 7131, 2.1 stating "Each College of the Los Rios Community College District shall determine the optimum class size for each course or subject area based on effectiveness of instruction and efficiency of operation", class size appears to be determined in an arbitrary, inconsistent, non-transparent manner, resulting in inequitable and inconsistent educational experiences for students across different Los Rios Community College District (LRCCD) colleges and classes;

Resolved, that the District Academic Senate requests, pursuant to Los Rios Community College District Policy 7131 authorizing the Chancellor or designee "to develop Administrative Regulations for setting class size guidelines for all area classes within a division", that a task force be convened to develop recommendations for establishing a standing governance body whose purpose shall be to set guidelines for determining optimum class sizes on a course-by-course, discipline-by-discipline, and college-by-college basis.

Resolved, that the resulting governance body includes representatives from the Academic Senates, Los Rios College Federation of Teachers (LRCFT), and administration from all four Los Rios colleges as well as appropriate district administrative leadership.

Resolved, that the resulting governance body develops processes and practices to establish and regularly evaluate criteria for setting and reviewing class sizes on a foundation of equity-based decision making, with an emphasis on faculty ability to implement best practices in equitable, effective education.

References

- Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC). [Setting Course Enrollment Maximums: Process, Roles, and Principles](#). Spring 2012.
- Arias, JJ & Walker, Douglas M. 2004. "Additional Evidence on the Relationship between Class Size and Student Performance," *The Journal of Economic Education*, Taylor & Francis Journals, vol. 35(4), pages 311-329, October.
- Horning, Alice. "The Definitive Article on Class Size." WPA. *Writing Program Administration*, vol. 31, no. 1-2, Council of Writing Program Administrators, 2007, p. 11-.
- Linton, C. (2011). *Equity 101: The Equity Framework*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) [Effective Practice Framework](#) The American Council on Education Course in Effective Teaching Practices California Community Colleges Online Education Initiative, [Course Design Rubric](#), April 2020.
- [LRCCD Collective Bargaining Agreement with LRCFT \("Contract"\) Article 4.5.1](#) Strategic Enrollment Management Project Team. [Schedule Development Guidelines](#). February 2020

LRCCD [Policy 7131](#) and [Regulation 7131](#): Class Size

ARC Academic Senate President, Alisa Shubb, Reports:

- The ARC Academic Senate voted in support of the LGBTQIA+ Disproportionate Impact (DI) project team report. The Asian Pacific Islander (API) DI project team report was presented at first reading.
- Following up on the inclusive practices series professional development panel discussion demystifying Academic Senate participation, the March 25th meeting of the ARC Academic Senate was held as a special orientation for incoming Senators and faculty interested in becoming Senators. Reports from the Academic Senate standing committees were heard and professional development on collaborative participation, Robert's Rules of Order, and reading an agenda were imbedded into the meeting structure.
- Academic Senate Officer Elections will be held April 22nd.
- At the April 8th meeting numerous public comments were heard about the importance of ARC's MESA/STEM center programming and the positive impact it has on student lives and success.

CRC Academic Senate President, Gregory Beyrer, Reports:

- We have created an Affordable Educational Resources Committee to promote and encourage the adoption of affordable educational resources throughout the college.
- In our regular discussion on anti-racism, we reaffirmed the importance of explicitly including these values in our college's mission, vision, and values statements.

FLC Academic Senate President, Paula Haug, Reports:

- This is Paula's last board meeting as FLC's senate president. After four years of service, she will pass the baton to president-elect Eric Wada on May 11. Biology Professor Eric Wada is a past local curriculum chair and is currently serving as the Los Rios District Curriculum Chair. He also currently serves as the state C-ID Curriculum Director for the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. FLC is extremely excited to support Eric in his role as senate president!
- The FLC Senate approved the request to form our Ethnic Studies Department *(pending vote on April 13)

SCC Academic Senate President, Lori Petite, Reports:

The Academic Senate of SCC appreciates the opportunity to address recent decisions at the District level as they relate to academic and professional matters, collegial consultation, and participatory governance processes.

Centralization without Consultation: Since 2020, the following local college services have been identified for or have been centralized by District.

1. Foundation Offices/Philanthropy Offices
2. Public Information Offices/Officers (PIOs)
3. College Websites & College Webmasters
4. Call Centers
5. College Nurses
6. Online Course Development Coordinators (OCDs)

7. Tutoring Services (<https://jobs.losrios.edu/postings/15282>)
8. Admissions and Records (announced via 3/17/21 email)
9. Financial Aid (announced via 3/17/21 email)
10. Outreach (announced 4/5/21)
11. Research (announced 4/5/21)
12. Information Technology (IT) (announced 4/5/21)

While not exhaustive, this list represents a wide swath of services across our colleges that have been consolidated and/or centralized to District, or for which these plans have been announced. “Processes for institutional planning” is a 10+1 area, and yet as of the writing of this report, District has not engaged the Academic Senate in this area. Further, many of these services directly impact other 10+1 areas including curriculum, student success, professional development, and college governance structures, among others.

Guiding Documents: The following establish the purview of the Academic Senate as well as other participatory governance groups.

- *AB 1725, Education Code, Title 5, and LRCCD Board Policies and Regulations* establish, recognize, and codify the purview of the Academic Senate, and were reviewed by the Board and the Chancellor in the recent Collegiality in Action session.
- *LRCCD BOT Regulation R-3411* recognizes the Chancellor’s Cabinet as a participatory governance group for issues of “District-level significance, which are not reserved by law, contract or agreement for negotiation, or which may be the responsibility of other groups.” Further establishes that the Chancellor's Cabinet will “serve as the steering committee for District strategic planning processes.”
- *LRCCD BOT Regulation R-3412* formally recognizes the District Equity and Student Success Committee (DESSC) with the purpose: “to provide recommendations to the District Academic Senate and advise the Board of Trustees or its representatives on matters related to District-wide issues of equity in our education system, including initiative and legislation, *and those of student support services and technologies designed to onboard students and move them through to completion.*” [emphasis added]
- *SCC Guide to Participatory Decision-making at Sacramento City College* (aka “*The Governance Guide*”) further refines and addresses governance processes across all constituency groups including students, faculty, classified staff, and managers “in the process of making decisions that directly and indirectly affect them.”
- Other colleges in the LRCCD have similar documents that address local decision-making and shared or participatory governance processes including the representation of multiple constituency groups, including students, faculty, classified professionals and administration.

While these documents outline the framework for decision-making processes, significant organizational restructuring has taken place without consultation, without robust and authentic engagement of participatory governance groups, and in many cases without formal communication. For example, while the Foundation/Philanthropy Offices may have been centralized in early 2020, it appears that the Board was not notified about this change until October when, during a presentation on Philanthropy efforts, one of the trustees asked a specific question about the local college philanthropy activities. As a minimum, decisions should have been first vetted locally per college governance processes, through the DESSC per their committee charge in R-3412 and for formal recommendation to the District Academic

Senate, as well as through Chancellor's Cabinet given the District-wide strategic planning implications as indicated in R-3411.

As an ongoing pattern of concern, issues of collegial consultation have been formally documented since at least 2018. Attempts at improving this have included a formal resolution on collegial consultation from SCC's Academic Senate, approval of a White Paper on Collegial Consultation, a district IBA session with the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, and Senate presidents, an information session for the Board of Trustees about the 10+1, and the recent Collegiality in Action session. Collegial consultation has continued to deteriorate, despite these efforts.

Harms/Impacts:

- **Students:** There may be benefits to organizational restructuring, including streamlining processes, improving efficiency, and reducing costs. However, these organizational goals do not justify the side-stepping of the consultative and governance processes that are well established and designed to ensure our students' needs remain at the center of policies and practices. A claim that "the sole motivation is equity" is not sufficient, nor is it currently substantiated. *Intent* cannot be bifurcated from the *impact* of these changes, nor used to justify or obfuscate the deleterious effects on our most vulnerable student populations. Centralizing services of any kind require consultation with those closest to our unique student populations to carefully monitor, address, and recommend best practices based on real-world interactions with our students. Additionally, we must critically dialogue about how making substantial changes during a global pandemic, when an already prolonged college shut down and forced online instruction has resulted in sharp declines in enrollment, particularly for our black and brown students, contributes to an even greater disservice to our students. Centralizing services at this time only depersonalizes our students' interactions with our college at a most critical time in their educational experience.
- **Local college autonomy, local decision-making, and accreditation:** SCC faculty continue to express significant concerns over the loss of local college autonomy, loss of autonomy of the college presidents, loss of local decision-making and the impacts to our students. For example, the centralization of the Foundation and Philanthropy offices has limited our local ability to award scholarships to our own SCC students. Additionally, each college has hired staff, such as outreach specialists, to cater to their unique student and community populations. The loss of autonomy also consequently impacts our unique outreach and in-reach efforts, especially as we move to recapture students we have lost and re-engage our community into the 2021-22 academic year. Further, faculty have expressed concerns that the lack of local college autonomy and a top-down approach from District outside the established governance processes may have negative impacts on our upcoming accreditation. LRCCD BOT Regulation R-3411 indicates "The Chancellor delegates full responsibility and authority to the College Presidents to implement and administer delegated District Policies *without interference* [emphasis added] and holds College Presidents accountable for the operation of the College." The SCC Academic Senate asserts that District efforts and actions toward centralization represent "interference" in the role of the college presidents.
- **Organizational health:** Finally, all of these areas of concern and complaint are symptomatic of a much larger decline in organizational health that has been observable and increasing over the last several years. This has not always been the case at LRCCD; previous District administrations defended and honored the role of the Academic Senate and our shared governance processes. Unfortunately, our senate believes that employees of all classifications are reluctant

to speak freely about the negative impacts and harms regarding District decision-making processes, and the culture of intimidation that has developed, for fear of reprisal or recrimination.

We believe the centralization measures that have been proposed, planned, and/or implemented violate both the spirit and letter of participatory governance and collegial consultation as outlined in state, LRCCD, and local college governance documents. We are optimistic that we can work together with a commitment to shared governance practices if given the opportunity. But without District's respect for the consultative and governance processes, we respectfully urge the Board to reject proposed, planned, or implemented centralization measures until (1) authentic and robust consultation has been achieved in accordance with our established governance models, (2) after our accreditation site visit occurs, and (3) after normal on-ground operations resume in a post-pandemic environment.

Thank you in advance for your consideration

Los Rios CCD Academic Senate Call to Action

Approved Tuesday November 17, 2020

The four Los Rios Colleges and the District Academic Senate support the Academic Senate of California Community Colleges (ASCCC) Fall 2019 Plenary Resolution "[Support Infusing Anti-Racism/No Hate Education in Community Colleges](#)". Specifically, to the following Resolved statements from that resolution:

- *denounce racism for its negative psychological, social, educational, and economic effects on human development throughout the lifespan;*
- *take steps to not only strive for a greater knowledge about and the celebration of diversity but also to support deeper training that reveals the inherent racism embedded in societal institutions in the United States, including the educational system, and asks individuals to examine their personal role in the support of racist structures and the commitment to work to dismantle structural racism; and*
- *infuse Anti- Racism/No Hate Education in all its activities and professional development opportunities to the degree that doing so is feasible.*

To achieve this, our Academic Senates are committed to:

1. Include a discussion of anti-racism/no-hate education on agendas. Remembering that we do not have to have an answer to start a conversation.
2. Prioritize culturally responsive curricular redesign with our curriculum committees.
3. Acknowledge, without assigning blame, that the structure of our colleges houses the biases and prejudices of their founding times. Those biases have privileged some and disadvantaged others, particularly African American and LatinX communities.
4. Prioritize the evaluation of hiring and evaluation processes with an equity lens.
5. Request services from the ASCCC about any of these topics if needed.
6. Evaluate our academic senates and find the voices among our faculties missing in governance. Find ways to empower those voices.
7. Work with our administrations, classified professional colleagues, and students to find constructive ways students can express themselves about structural and historical biases that exist.