



ASCCC
December 13, 2013
Executive Meeting
Supplemental Materials

Shaaron Vogel

Butte College Nursing Faculty

Were not read due to time shortage.

Concerns for the ASCCC

I am Shaaron Vogel and I am here today as a member of the community college faculty and a member of the body. I am also a current member of my local senate.

When I first came on the ASCCC executive board there was great division and strife. Members would yell, burst into tears, and walk out of meetings. The board struggled to keep focus and get critical work done. The body was very aware of this and used their votes to change the voices at the table. The last 8 Presidents worked very hard to earn the ASCCC respect statewide and now the ASCCC voice is valued and respected. You are jeopardizing this hard work. Do not destroy what has been built.

Julie was there through it all and has worked under at least 9 presidents who had very few issues with her performance. She earned her BS, masters and now working on her PhD. She has brought to the ASCCC her expertise, special certifications and many grants. Now within less than two months the current President has issues with Julie's performance. Today you are requested to do a closed session. This is denying the public and the body access to the discussion that is to take place.

Procedures are not being followed and items are not being brought to the full exec and full board. It has been stressed that the ASCCC values transparency and accountability yet I am not seeing that. The lawyer opened with how she values collegiality, respect and fairness yet this is not happening at this time on this board. A few members of this board have attempted a mini coup and sadly my own past local President got pulled into this division. We need unity and focus to keep and build on what the ASCCC has--- do not destroy all the hard work with division. The word of this division and lack of focus is already known to some around the state so do not give them a reason to pull back from valuing our voice and knowledge.

Stop fighting and focus on the greater good. The body will be watching.

On the ASCCC website it has posted the values: Leadership, Empowerment and Voice yet I am hearing that these values are not being honored by all. I also brought with me a book called "The Real Healthcare Reform" by Linda Leekley and Stacey Turnure. It talks about the lack of civility, gossip, bullying and conflict resolution in the healthcare industry. Examples of these are: using demeaning or disparaging language, gossip or slander, intimidation, sabotage, bullying, offensive written communications, and hate. I am hearing about some of these behaviors exhibited at times on the executive board and it is so sad because the results are physical and psychological stress on all members. I have several quotes from the book but will not include due to time.

Do not destroy what many have worked so hard for. Stop this division and focus on the work to be done.

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Dear Executive Committee:

Writing this letter really pisses me off. I'm pissed at you, the Exec members, for being in the position where you might have to read it. That you got yourselves in that position means that you are, at this moment, wasting the mental, emotional, and financial resources of the Academic Senate, and are failing the over fifty-eight thousand faculty and two point three million students who are depending on your leadership.

On November 22nd, you received an email telling you that, on December 13th, instead of your scheduled strategic planning meeting, you would attend a closed session, in which the Senate's attorney would inform you of your options regarding "our employee." (And since you have only one employee, that would be a reference to Julie Adams.)

If any of you had a clear comprehension of what you were elected to do, you would have responded as follows:

"I will not be attending the meeting proposed for December 13th on the grounds that such a meeting would be a waste of Senate resources. You, the President, and the Executive Director, are at a negative impasse with respect to your ability to work together constructively and collegially. That's a problem between the two of you. Dismiss the freaking attorney, hire a counselor, and work it out. Fast. It's essential to the well-being of the Senate that the President and Executive Director have a positive working relationship. It's detrimental to the well-being of the Senate that I, an Exec member, get dragged into this and spend my time, energy, and Senate money trying to decide whose side I'm on. I'm on the Senate's side. From my side, it's clear that you two have to work well together. So get help, and get over it. Fast. Am I repeating myself?"

Now that I've told you what you should have done but didn't, I'm going to tell you where I'm coming from. Those of you with ADHD, pop a Ritalin because this will take a while.

By now you probably know that I love and respect Julie Adams, and am certain that the Academic Senate has become the force for good that it has in no small measure as a result of Julie's dedication and competence. You probably know this because you probably know, at a minimum, that I negotiated that financial penalty clause in her contract that's designed to ensure that, when and if Julie leaves the Senate, it's by her choice. Now, why would I have done such a thing? Obviously because I think she's a treasure; she's dedicated to the mission of the community colleges and to the Academic Senate's role in fulfilling that mission, and she's good and helpful and efficient and proactive and downright superhuman in the time and energy she commits to helping the Exec achieve its goals, which, of course, are the goals of the Body. She's even superb at helping to achieve goals that are not the goals of the Body - yet. Many's the time, as president, that I walked in and said, "Julie, I want to initiate blah," and she said, "You can't initiate blah. There are no resolutions calling for blah, and the president, exalted and worthy of reverence as he (in this case) may be, does not make Senate policy on his own. The Pope does that, but that's a different institution." At such junctures, I would turn away, my body language articulating dejection and disappointment, but also slyly smiling. Because invariably, and I mean *invariably*, within at most two days, and usually less, Julie would come to me with a strategy for getting blah rolling, while staying firmly within the bounds of Senate procedures. Unless she thought blah was stupid, in which case we talked about it, and I

abandoned the idea, or Julie developed a strategy for advancing blah to the point where other people could tell me it was stupid. Or not.

But there's another side to why I wanted that clause in her contract, and that is that I saw this day coming. In my few years with the Senate, I must have heard several dozen times that "Julie has too much power," that she doesn't grasp that the senate is a "faculty" organization. (That, of course, is mistaken. She fully grasps that it's a faculty organization - that's why she's committed to it. And she completely understands that she has only so much authority as the Exec gives her.) At times this has been a genuine misperception of Julie's role; and, as often, it has just been a cover for someone whose personality doesn't synch with Julie's. Happily, most of our past Exec officers and Committee members have had a deep appreciation of the help and support they received from Julie, and for the continuity she has provided between their own brief passages on the Senate stage. However, it was inevitable that someday the necessary adjustments between each new President and the Executive Director would not gel, and in that event I wanted Julie to have significant protection against an unjust dismissal. Full-time faculty, who are protected on all sides by tenure and due process, should understand this sentiment.

It's also my perception - and please raise your hand if you disagree here, but otherwise remain silent - that faculty have often led rather sheltered lives, going from high school to college to grad school and on to work in.....school. This can make them somewhat childlike, or, in the right situations, resemble nothing so much as screaming squirrels. Faculty don't have employees, they have no training or experience in how to deal with employees, and they have no knowledge of how to resolve conflicts between employees and their employers. So you can see why I had little confidence that, when the inevitable impasse between a President and the Executive Director occurred, it would be resolved artfully. Instead, I suspected that the effort might quickly become grotesque, and my suspicion is borne out by the meeting to which you have committed yourselves on the 13th. Canceling real and important Senate business (strategic planning), calling for a closed meeting on "our employee," explaining to the Executive Director in a legalese-up letter why she will be excluded from the meeting, and Executive Committee members consenting to such a meeting - all of this serves as a perfect model for The Screaming Squirrel/Child In A Sandbox Approach To Conflict Resolution.

If you think that I'm placing blame on the President, here, don't. What I just said is that I think the 13th meeting is a terrible way to handle this conflict, but that there's no reason to suppose that faculty would be anything but terrible at this sort of thing. You may not know about my relation to Beth Smith, and I want to tell you about that. The fact is that I have a long, personal relationship to Beth, and have great affection for her and the utmost respect for her leadership abilities. I worked for many months with Beth's husband, Bill Bradley, on a document for Grossmont College defining the faculty role in planning and budgeting, and consider that work with Bill to be one of the highlights of my academic career. Our document was later turned into a paper for the Academic Senate, the first on that subject in the Senate's history. Beth and Bill have visited my wife, Kate, and me in France, as have Julie Adams and her husband, Ken. Beth and I have kept in touch by email over the years, and I have strongly encouraged and supported her involvement in the Senate, up to and including her run for the presidency.

At one point in our correspondence, Beth expressed discouragement at the lack of relevancy of Exec's functions to the real lives of students. You ADHD people should pop another Ritalin, because I'm going to reproduce a large chunk of my reply, and I'll tell you the point later. What I said, in large part, was this:

“...If you're going to withstand the drudgery of serving on Exec--especially as an officer--and more especially with the aim of becoming president--you have to believe that ASCCC serves a vital function at a level that can't be addressed by local senates....

“I know that one of the things that got me involved in the ASCCC in the first place, and that kept me going right through my presidency, was the elitist relegation of CCs to 3rd-class status, as bespoke in the history of CCs in America, and as reflected in the current-day funding of CCs in CA. As president, I was able to get the "Real Costs of Education" project off the ground and a considerable distance down the road. The Chancellor's office was actually taking the lead on the research, and the BOG was paying attention. I would argue that, even in today's economic atmosphere, a radical revision of the funding of CCs is warranted--but who would listen? This remains, though, a clear example of something that you can only accomplish at the state level, as opposed to the local.

“Another subject that, in fact, I made no headway on, but about which I felt passionately, was that of faculty evaluations/peer review, and the necessity of tying that to a robust, cradle-to-grave, program of faculty development. Funding for faculty development was always the first thing to get cut in the state budget negotiations, and that seemed to me a huge mistake. I see faculty development as critical to high faculty morale, superior faculty performance, and hence to student success. That's a case that needs to be, and can only be, made at the state level. The statewide Senate--working with FACCC and the unions--could/should take the lead on this, with ASCCC lighting the way to the development of robust, effective local programs. But again, we're talking, in part, about increased funding, and who's going to listen to that? (I noticed in the current Rostrum that the Faculty Development Committee is reminding people that they still exist.)

“Finally, I'll mention the fight against SLOs. I've watched in dismay as CC faculty have acquiesced in, and perhaps even embraced, this abomination imposed by the Accreditation people. I think the whole concept--or constellation of concepts--involved in SLOs needs to be challenged, beaten back, and ultimately dismissed. The ASCCC ought to be reminding faculty and students that "You are not a gadget!" and that teachers should not teach in order that their students should please an algorithm. The ASCCC should be taking the lead in defining and championing true learning, and should not facilitate those people and programs that would steal its soul. There was a point at which it could be argued that "apparent acquiescence" in the Accreditation Commission's demands could be seen as a form of jiu-jitsu, yielding in order to defeat; but it looks to me as though that point has long passed, and that what we've got now is simple submission. The Senate seems to have drunk the Kool-Aid.

“I guess what I'm saying is that, for me, there were and still are issues that warrant one's involvement in ASCCC. But I'm not there, and I'm not butting up against the CA economy--but I can certainly see how being there and doing that could be demoralizing.”

Here's the point. Beth thanked me and she stayed the course. We were discussing big ideas; we talked about the role of ASCCC President as engaging the faculty in the development and execution of those ideas, and as communicating to faculty, through her service, the worth and nobility of the almost impossible jobs they are asked to do. Beth got it; she persisted and assumed the vice-presidency and the presidency with the goal of enhancing the education of California Community College students in ways that were real and immediate, and that could only be accomplished at the statewide level.

So we have a President, committed to creating a richer education for students, and an Executive Director, equally committed to facilitating the achievement of that goal. So why can't they work together?

There are, of course, times when the shit really comes down between two people, and there's just no way. I absolutely hated my last department chair, and would have slit my wrists before I worked with her. But I saw her as an unethical, unprincipled person. And I couldn't maintain my friendship with the guitar player in my last band, because he went so far out on the right politically that I felt he had lost all human empathy. But these were situations where the other person and I had fundamentally conflicting value systems. I don't see that level of conflict at all in the case of Julie and Beth. Au contraire. Moreover, they have worked together collegially and productively in the past.

So, in case anyone is still the least bit inclined to listen to what I'm saying, here, again, is what I recommend:

That the Executive Committee absolutely not engage in a performance review, or a closed meeting, or any activity that has a whiff of determining blame in the conflict between the President and the Executive Director.

That the Executive Committee direct the Executive Director and the President to seek the assistance of a counselor/mediator to assist them in resolving their differences.

That the two principals take the advice of a friend, that the goals that they share are too important to get lost in this sort of distraction.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Hoke Simpson
Past President

KATHERINE W. CLARK

1389 Terrace Way
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

December 12, 2013

Executive Committee Members of the
Academic Senate for California Community Colleges
5555 Capitol Mall, Suite 525
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Executive Committee Meeting, December 13, 2013

Dear Executive Committee Members—and Friends:

With a heavy heart, I write to share my perspective on actions being contemplated at your Executive Committee meeting this Friday, December 13, 2013. I am unable to travel to Sacramento to deliver these thoughts personally, so I must trust that my written words can convey my deep concern for your positions of leadership and for the resultant direction of the Academic Senate in the forthcoming years.

Above all else, my message is this: please do not act precipitously in a manner that endangers the Academic Senate's reputation among local senates, its standing among peer academic groups and within ICAS, or its singular, long-standing achievements in the eyes of others in the community college system and beyond. It is incumbent upon all Executive Committee members to act in concert and after due deliberation about the long-term impact your decisions might have upon others. Certainly I would urge the Executive Committee to exercise its responsibilities for seeing that all options have been exhausted, that Executive Committee members as well as any staff member in question engage in professional mediation prior to any final decision being made by the Executive Committee. Ultimately, the behavior and performance of all Executive Committee members is in question as well and must be justifiable to the larger whole around the state.

At the Fall 2013 Plenary Session, the body seemed largely oblivious to any internal tumult; judging by the phone calls I have received in the past weeks, that no longer seems to be the case. It is increasingly apparent that others, outside the immediacy of the Executive Committee, have identified a level of dysfunction within their elected Academic Senate; they, like me, are troubled and saddened. Further, as we all know from experience with our local senates, external parties are quick to seize upon disruption—or rupture—to further weaken a senate body. That cannot happen, and it will not happen if all Executive Committee members assume their responsibilities for ensuring health, honesty, and transparency of the Academic Senate's actions.

While some Executive Committee members may have ideas about new Academic Senate directions and future endeavors, the body can assist you in defining and debating those plans. However, no vision can be enacted and no grand goals pursued if some Executive Committee members continue to act in isolation or exclusion, or without the clear, unambiguous support of the entire Exec body; your actions cannot be seen as driven by any single individual or small group.

Others who may be present at your meeting or communicating with you will perhaps attest to the experiences they have had with individuals caught in this conundrum. I urge you to also see your actions as larger than the skirmishes between personality and as a larger issue calling upon your individual and collective leadership to resolve.

The sheer number of former Academic Senate Presidents and officers who may address you attest to the gravity of this situation and our concern for our beloved Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. I'd hope you would consider our advice as emerging from our collective experiences and fondness for the historical Senate we all served—and for your own status as current elected officers and members.

Thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts as you begin your deliberations.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Clark" with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Kate Clark
Senator Emerita
Past President,
Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (2003-2005)

MARK SNOWHITE

December 6, 2013

ASCCC Executive Committee Members

Dear Executive Committee Members:

I have worked on behalf of the Academic Senate for Community Colleges for many years. I served on the Executive Committee for ten years, six of those as secretary. Before that I was a delegate representing my local senate and member of the Standards and Practices committee. I am now retired from full-time teaching but still teach part-time and work on a faculty review committee and as a reviewer in the C-ID program. I have worked for many years for the betterment of our system through this organization, and I care deeply about its success to bring affordable, quality post-secondary education to all Californians. So I am very much concerned about the current conflict between the organization's executive director and current president, a conflict which appears to endanger the effectiveness of the Academic Senate.

I will not comment on the particulars of this matter since I have no direct knowledge about the specific relevant details, but I do want to express my confidence in the abilities and—more importantly— the character of Julie Adams.

In the ten years that I served on the Executive Committee, Julie provided me with immeasurable help in fulfilling my responsibilities. As a member of the Standards and Practices committee, she coordinated the committee's efforts with the Senate office and helped devise new, more efficient ways to accomplish our mission, especially Disciplines List review and executing the process for senate awards. During sessions, she worked tirelessly with the Resolutions committee editing and re-editing the resolutions so they were available on time. When I was secretary, she took thorough minutes and helped me edit the final drafts. When I coordinated IMPAC meetings, she provided me with all the information I needed about the participants and background information for my reports. Also, she worked hard writing key parts of grants that I worked with her on, putting together all of the parts of those grants so that the Senate succeeded in gaining funding. I could easily go on. But these examples clearly demonstrate her

considerable abilities and dedication to this organization. I'm sure that each of you could add to my list of examples.

On a more personal note, I have always found working with Julie very enjoyable. She consistently expressed the critical distinction that she is charged with *executing* Senate policies, not *determining* them. When she was a member of committees and work groups I participated on, she focused on the executive functions of the organization. While she is a woman of conviction and considerable experience handling Senate matters—certainly far more experience than any one Senate officer whom she supported—she was an excellent listener and considered opposing opinions about executive matters analytically. She always contributed a great deal and with an open, cooperative demeanor.

The Academic Senate has grown consistently through the years that she has overseen its executive functions. This is certainly not a coincidence. When she began, she performed routine secretarial duties and arranged for session twice a year; now she is overseeing an office with a multitude of responsibilities and arranging for institutes and other functions continuously throughout the year. She has developed the considerable skills of developing internal procedures; hiring, training and evaluating staff; coordinating with other organizations and the Chancellor's Office; providing high quality promotional materials; and working successfully with an assortment of Senate officers with very diverse needs and personalities. She has worked for many years earning the admiration of those with whom she works and the gratitude of those whom she has supported so unfailingly. While I can not comment on the current conflicts, I can certainly attest to her strength of character, her amazing productivity, and her demonstrated ability to work with others.

Please realize that her work has been most vital to the success of the Academic Senate, through which the faculty voices its positions and discharges its other statewide responsibilities. I hope that for the sake of the Academic Senate and the many faculty members it represents, the current conflicts are favorably resolved in a way that allows Julie to continue to provide the executive functions so vital to its health and effectiveness.

Sincerely yours,

Mark Snowwhite, Senator Emeritus

To: ASCCC Executive Committee
Topic: Executive Committee Leadership

Friday, 13 December 2013

Members of the Executive Committee:

I understand from conversations with several members of the Executive Committee that as the fiscal crisis of California and our colleges has subsided, that the energy and much of the focus of the Executive Committee has turned inward in a destructive way, and that much of this unproductive energy revolves around the relationship between the President and the Executive Director.

I served on two Curriculum Committees (and thus two Curriculum Institutes) before being elected to the Executive Committee, on which I served for an additional five years, and thus I have worked extensively with the Executive Director on too many committees, too many institutes, and too many resolutions even to count. In 30+ years of professional life in higher education, at both the University of California and in California Community Colleges, I have *never* known an individual more committed to her work and whose work is as much a labor of passion as the executive director, Julie Adams. That passion can lead to disagreements, sometimes sharp, between Julie and members of the Executive Committee. I had multiple occasions to disagree with Julie. She was often right; when she wasn't, she acknowledged it immediately, and those disagreements *never* became personal or interfered with her work as Executive Director or the work of the Senate so far as I could see. I can imagine working closely with Julie would be a challenge; I cannot imagine working with Julie for *any* period of time and not recognizing what an invaluable resource she is to the Senate, our colleges, and our students.

I served on the Executive Committee with the President, Beth Smith, for three years. Beth and I often disagreed, often about foundational issues such as the mission and role of the Senate itself. Beth and I (and Wheeler) ran for the position of vice president three years ago; Beth won that election and I chose not to trickle. Despite frequent strong disagreement on matters of principle, however, I have always believed that Beth wanted what she believed to be best for the Senate.

Whatever might be best for the Senate, no construction of that question can imagine that deep conflict between the President and the Executive director reflects well on the Executive Committee, the Senate, or the faculty we serve, and it is, I believe, of the greatest importance that the Executive Committee identify means of resolving this conflict.

As you may know, after leaving Exec, I ran successfully for one of the faculty positions on the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. Some commissioners, especially those from outside our system, see the Senate and the faculty unions through the same lens: all we care about is promoting the selfish interests of faculty. My deep and abiding love for the Senate is based on the degree to which it has successfully persuaded faculty to put aside individual differences and work together for the common good of our students. It is inconceivable to

me that the Executive Committee could not find a way to resolve this conflict: I believe it is your *responsibility* to do so and to return to a focus on the work for which each of you was elected.

Sincerely,

Dr. Richard Mahon
Executive Committee Member, 2006-2011
Professor of Humanities, Riverside City College
2013 Hayward Award Recipient

JP testimony at Exec 12-13-13

When I got on Exec, the committee was in very bad shape---after several years of contentious fighting and divisiveness. Members were in one camp or another, and what suffered besides the individuals' stress level was the quality of work & the reputation of the ASCCC. In-fighting means time was spent on things *other* than the state business.

Fortunately with a change of leadership and membership, Exec got back to being a collegial team---one that I was happy to serve on for 10 years. In addition, the ASCCC's reputation and stature grew to the highest level ever.

Over the years, anytime I encouraged local faculty to run for Exec, I assured them that the state senate was very different from many local senates: instead of personality conflicts and the local petty stresses, the ASCCC focused on the work.

While I believe I was well prepared to be president, I was nonetheless astonished by the workload and responsibility. We were struggling with issues of state-wide significance---pre reqs, SB 1440, and SSTF---in addition to the myriad regular ASCCC activities. Managing these huge tasks required a collaborative team of officers, Exec members, executive director, staff and local faculty appointees.

It would have been impossible to accomplish what we got done without the full time support of the exec director and office staff. The marginalizing of the exec director this year is frightening to me ----for many reasons, but mostly because no one can be president---and do the necessary work---without the exec director's institutional memory, multi-tasking skills, and daily attention to a vast array of details. For anyone attempting to do this work alone I would ask what critical business on behalf of the state's faculty is being ignored? Yes, I can find things to criticize about the ED (and I have)---but I could find things to criticize about each member of Exec—including myself. But we had to work together, and together a great deal was accomplished. I truly fear the climate now could lead to the demise of the ASCCC----and people like Bob Shireman are looking for opportunities to weaken if not destroy the local as well as state senates.

It is the responsibility of the each Exec member to insist that 1) ASCCC is functioning at its highest level which means focusing on the academic business for the state's faculty and students, and 2) collegiality is the daily guidepost, which likely means immediate mediation is necessary. Please do not settle for any less.

To: ASCCC Executive Committee

From: Ian Walton, Senator Emerita, Past President (2005 – 2007)

Date: 12/13/13

Topic: Executive Committee Responsibility

Madame President, Executive Committee Members,

I'm Ian Walton; I am one of a long line of past presidents of this fine organization. Many of us have helped over the years to balance the perspectives of President, Executive Director, Executive Committee and the body, for the ultimate good of the faculty. Today, several of us are increasingly concerned that the Senate is experiencing a severe dysfunction that is negatively affecting both its operations and its statewide reputation.

While the dysfunction seems to center on the working relationship between the Executive Director and the President, it is actually impeding the ability of each Executive Committee member to do the job you were elected to do – to be fully informed and to participate in all decisions, as you serve our faculty colleagues throughout the state. While it is not your fault, it is now clearly your responsibility to determine all the facts and to implement a solution.

By way of background, you will all have heard that the transition to a new president always involves changes in work and communication styles on the part of both individuals. Some past presidents have described how it was initially difficult – for example, a long established role of the Executive Director is to raise concerns in areas where new Presidents may not fully understand the statewide ramifications of actions that would be acceptable at a local level. But much more importantly, every one of those past presidents successfully collaborated as a professional with the Executive Director who is a fellow professional, and quickly developed an excellent working relationship.

For the first time in nine presidents this process has failed. It seems astoundingly premature to blame that on just one of the two parties. And make no mistake, that's what today's agenda is doing. By its very nature, an out of sequence performance evaluation is disciplinary. It would be equally premature to hold a vote of no confidence in the President today.

Today's actions are being taken without fully informing or consulting the Executive Committee as a whole, and most worryingly without significant agreement from the three elected officers. The dysfunction was also deliberately hidden from the body at the recent Fall Session. Several suggestions for mediation appear to have been rejected by the President.

I therefore propose that the Executive Committee should own up to its part in this malfunction and take the following immediate remedial actions, today:

- 1) Conduct this meeting and future meetings in public – as formally requested by the Executive Director;
- 2) Table the portion of Agenda Item D “Performance Evaluation”;
- 3) Initiate a public discussion of the conduct of both the President and the Executive Director, with the goal of finding and implementing solutions to the current inability of the Executive Committee to carry out its proper role;
- 4) Under the second portion of Agenda Item D, receive public advice, if necessary, from the Senate Attorney, subject to it being clear that the attorney works for the Executive Committee as a whole – not for either the Executive Director or the President;
- 5) Take no precipitate personnel action against either the President or the Executive Director until all the facts are openly determined and better solutions such as mediation have been completed.

I will provide a copy of this testimony to Secretary Bruno and request that it be included in the formal minutes of the meeting.

Thank you for listening and for your hard work on behalf of the faculty.

December 12, 2013

Dear Members of the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges:

While it has been more than four years since I last served as a part of you, I was given the privilege of working with almost all of you on the Executive Committee and the chance to grow in my appreciation of the strengths that each of you bring to this organization. You bring to this organization a breadth of experience and viewpoints, all of which serve to make the Academic Senate more inclusive, more judicious in its actions, and stronger as a leadership body than any single individual could hope to achieve on his/her own.

As one of the few Academic Senate presidents to transition into an administrative position at a college after serving, I can say that working with such a diverse group of individuals – in background, learning style, conviction, and viewpoint – has been key to my preparation for serving as a dean. By working with such a diverse group, I improved my ability to listen with a bigger set of ears and not just the ears I was used to, ones that were only attuned to a familiar frequency. I learned to listen beyond myself, and that allowed me to better understand the perspectives of others, and that has made me a better administrator and has helped me to work more effectively as a part of the larger whole, which, in my case, is Ohlone College.

You are all strong individuals. You could not be leaders otherwise, and you would not have been elected to the Executive Committee. You, too, have been tasked with serving effectively as a part of a larger whole, one representing the thousands of faculty who work for California community colleges. I ask that all of you use all of the strengths that you bring to the table to work together to bring an end to the divisiveness that is now plaguing the Executive Committee. But even more than your individual strengths, I ask you to listen to one another. I ask you to use the talents and skills that assist you in leading the faculty of the California community colleges to work through the issues that threaten to tear apart the Executive Committee and, by extension, the Academic Senate as a whole.

Trusting in your ability to work cooperatively in the best interests of the faculty that you represent and the students that we all serve,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Wade Lieu". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mark Wade Lieu
Dean, Language and Communication – Ohlone College
Former President, ASCCC, 2007-2009

December 9, 2013

Dear Senate Colleagues,

It is gratifying to know that a Senator Emeritus may yet on occasion have a voice in Executive Committee deliberations. As you have likely surmised, I am writing concerning Executive Director Julie Adams' December 3, 2013 request for assistance. As sadly disturbing as the concerns expressed in her letter, even more disturbing is that Julie Adams, of all people, our Julie, who has served the Senate so faithfully for nearly two decades, should feel compelled to resort to such measures. Surely you must agree that village elders such as Julie deserve our gratitude and respect, not shunning condemnation for striving to fulfill their historic roles.

It has been my honor to work closely with the Senate for many years, and I know firsthand the joy of serving on an Exec that addresses differences through thoughtful discussion and a sense of shared mission. I have learned also that the character exhibited by an organization often finds its direction through the example set by its leadership. Respect for differences of opinion, acceptance of our human foibles, transparency, balanced and thoughtful approaches to dealing with personnel situations, principled adherence to our codes and regulations, and collegiality that celebrates our best efforts, these are among the hallmarks of effective leadership.

As a student of our Senate, I've long marveled at its growth and development, its ability to evolve through devastating setbacks and come back as strong and effective as ever. And I can say with absolute conviction that Julie Adams has been the common thread that gives unity to nearly two decades of Senate achievements. In my post-Exec years of committee service with the AAUP and CHEA, I've come to understand that our Academic Senate is the envy of educators everywhere, an incalculably vital institution in a world defined increasingly by profiteers and external monitors, a tenuous treasure that requires vigilance unencumbered by invective disharmony within its leadership. In the end, I believe that energy expended on rancorous behavior and political schisms will be measured in squandered opportunities of service to our mission and the loss of organizational unity.

My service on the Senate's Executive Committee provided an unparalleled opportunity to make a positive impact on a system that serves one-fifth of America's college and university students. I am grateful for those leaders, particularly Julie Adams, whose professionalism is such that Exec became a harbor of shared energy, transparency, and collegiality, a place where we could make good use of our time. My sincerest wish is that members of the present Executive Committee may one day look back on their service and know as I do that meaningful work can be accomplished collegially, with the respect and compassion that is central to our profession as educators.

Collegially,
Greg Gilbert
ASCCC Emeritus