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Resolution of No Confidence in the President of California State University, San Bernardino

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RESOLUTION OF NO CONFIDENCE IN THE PRESIDENT OF CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO

- WHEREAS:** Faculty, staff and administrators at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) share an abiding commitment to maintain an educational environment where student learning is central to the mission of the university; and
- WHEREAS:** Within three years of the appointment of President Tomás Morales, in response to a decline in shared decision making, a marked turnover in the senior administration, and a perceptible change in campus climate, the Faculty Senate commissioned a climate survey at CSUSB; and
- WHEREAS:** The results of the campus climate survey, with more than 750 faculty, staff, and administrators responding, revealed that over two-thirds of the respondents indicated the climate had changed, and 89% of those individuals stated that the climate had become worse; and
- WHEREAS:** The results indicated that an atmosphere of toxicity, fear and distrust of the central administration has developed among CSUSB faculty, administrators, and staff during the President's tenure, with numerous reports of bullying, favoritism and retaliation; and
- WHEREAS:** One year after the release of the climate survey findings, despite initially promising that all of the survey's recommendations would be implemented, the President has failed to address the bulk of the recommendations for improving campus climate, including the development of an anti-bullying policy and an audit of the Human Resources department; and
- WHEREAS:** President Morales continues to be unwilling to acknowledge the severity of the problems of fear and distrust among employees; and
- WHEREAS:** President Morales has abandoned long-standing shared governance practices, declining to consult with established Faculty Senate committees before making decisions, refusing multiple invitations from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for meetings, discontinuing the practice of holding scheduled quarterly open meetings with faculty, neglecting to provide useful information in his reports to the faculty, and failing to involve the university community in key decisions; and
- WHEREAS:** The lack of shared governance has resulted in an erosion of the centrality of Academic Affairs, the division most critical to fulfilling the mission of the university, through a consistent decline in its share of the base budget and a failure to hire sufficient tenure track faculty to meet key university targets set by the current administration; and

- WHEREAS:** Key elements of the strategic plan are already failing as a result, with the administration not willing to make concrete plans to achieve the targets it made to reduce the student-faculty ratio and to increase the proportion of tenure track faculty, both critical to assuring student learning and progress towards graduation; and
- WHEREAS:** The leading indicators of student success, particularly first year student retention, have declined steadily since 2012, and enrollment has been so poorly managed that the President now talks about the need to “suppress” CSUSB’s enrollment; and
- WHEREAS:** There has been an unusually high level of turnover in the CSUSB senior administration since President Morales' arrival on campus, as highly regarded longstanding administrators have been fired or asked to resign, resulting in a loss of institutional memory and a weakened understanding of CSUSB’s rootedness in our service area; and
- WHEREAS:** President Morales has exhibited cronyism and favoritism in his appointment of interim administrators and by offering a post-retirement position to former Cal Poly Pomona President Ortiz; and
- WHEREAS:** A majority of all faculty, staff, and administrator respondents to the campus climate survey have lost confidence in the campus leadership, believe that it is not open to receiving feedback, has not communicated a clear direction, and does not act with honesty and integrity; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED:** That the Faculty Senate of California State University, San Bernardino has no confidence in the ability of President Tomás Morales to lead CSUSB in a manner that enables our faculty, staff, and administrators to educate and serve our students effectively; and be it further
- RESOLVED:** That the Faculty Senate will welcome a new President who embraces shared governance in deed as well as word, transparency, and mutual trust and respect, and will work actively to correct the issues identified in this resolution; and be it further
- RESOLVED:** That the faculty participate in a referendum on this resolution in accordance with the Senate bylaws for elections. The referendum shall be completed by May 26, 2017; and be it further
- RESOLVED:** That copies of this resolution be sent to Chancellor White, the Board of Trustees, the Academic Senate of the California State University, CSU campus senate chairs, Associated Students Inc. at CSUSB, and CSU President Tomás Morales.

Approved by the CSUSB Faculty Senate


Karen Kolehmainen, Chair

5/9/17
Date

Rationale

The campus deserves leadership that is as good as the faculty, staff and students it serves and that consistently displays core values of openness, honesty, transparency and integrity. This president's leadership fails those tests. Faculty, staff, and administrators have been waiting patiently for a coherent presidential response to the damaging findings of the campus climate survey. We have not seen one. The president has chosen to deny the importance of the problems. He disavows the 'climate of fear' he has created and seems disinterested in resolving the climate issues, clearly attributable to him. He has chosen to turn his back on the effective and cherished tradition of shared governance on this campus. He has refused to meet with us or work with us to improve these conditions, instead manipulatively choosing to blame the senate and survey committee for the widespread loss of confidence in his leadership across the campus.

Major decisions have been made with little or no faculty input and have been the worse for that omission. These include the shift of summer session to self-support, the adoption of Agent of Change, the shift in location of commencement to a city outside of San Bernardino, and the development of Coyote First Step. Most recently, the President signed an MOU with Linked Learning, a development with possible curricular implications, without faculty consultation. In other cases, such as the decision on teaching assignments under the semester system, the administration has simply rejected faculty advice, without discussion or reasoned explanation. The senate appointed a committee to look at the implications of the teaching load under semesters for faculty ability to meet the demands of the strategic plan. The committee's report, endorsed by the Faculty Senate, was never acknowledged by the President. Half a year later, the President asked the faculty inclusive Q2S steering committee for a recommendation on this same issue and then, upon receipt of that recommendation, immediately rejected it without discussion or reasoned explanation, showing that the president's invitation was never genuine but a manipulative attempt to validate a pre-determined outcome.

The central administration operates in secret and seems to encourage the division of the campus into factions. Friends are rewarded, sometimes lavishly; enemies are ignored or suffer retaliation. Compliance is valued over competence and dissent is not tolerated. President Morales pays lip service to cherished values, like shared governance, but does not practice them; he frequently talks about transparency, integrity and openness, yet fails to practice these values, and he is failing the faculty, staff, administrators, and students of this university.

We respectfully request that faculty colleagues join us in calling for an end to this unworthy leadership by voting decisively in favor of no confidence in the President. We do not undertake this step lightly, but the President has established a pattern of behavior that jeopardizes our mission to provide our students with a quality education. We believe we must take this action now to restore the health of our cherished institution.

Supporting Documents:

For the campus climate survey results and the one year follow-up, see <http://senate.csusb.edu/reports.htm>