

California State University, San Bernardino

CSUSB ScholarWorks

Faculty Senate records

Arthur E. Nelson University Archives

6-29-2015

Request for Assistance in Assessing and Addressing Campus Climate Issues at CSUSB

CSUSB Faculty Senate

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/facultysenate>

Recommended Citation

CSUSB Faculty Senate, "Request for Assistance in Assessing and Addressing Campus Climate Issues at CSUSB" (2015). *Faculty Senate records*. 204.

<https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/facultysenate/204>

This Document is brought to you for free and open access by the Arthur E. Nelson University Archives at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Senate records by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@csusb.edu.



Academic Affairs
Faculty Senate

June 29, 2015

Chancellor Timothy P. White
California State University
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, CA 90802

Re: Request for Assistance in Assessing and Addressing Campus Climate Issues at CSUSB

Dear Chancellor White:

I enclose a "Resolution of Request to Chancellor Timothy White for Assistance in Assessing and Addressing Potential Issues in Our Campus Climate: A Respectful Request for Help." It was occasioned by a growing distress among our faculty that shared governance and the collegial atmosphere that has always characterized our campus has been deteriorating, a distress that was strongly voiced at two general faculty meetings (each with over a hundred faculty in attendance--during finals week, no less) that we held to gauge faculty sentiment after the abrupt dismissal of a popular, effective, and respected Provost. While this dismissal has given faculty a sense of urgency, the faculty's concerns go well beyond any individual personnel issue to the very foundations of faculty-administrative relations at our campus. (I should say, faculty have also been asked by many staff, who feel particularly vulnerable at this time, to carry the flag for them as well as for ourselves on this issue.) We are urgently seeking your help in preventing further deterioration of campus climate and shared governance, so we can focus on our central mission of serving our students.

Please let us know how we should proceed. I and, if you agree, our Vice Chair, Karen Kolehmainen, would be happy to come down to Golden Shore to discuss the process and to answer any questions you may have. My contact information is as follows (this being summer, I am giving you my home and cell phone numbers): Ted Ruml, CSUSB Faculty Senate Chair, truml@csusb.edu, (909) 335-9326; 677-8181 (cell). While we understand that a Climate Survey is best administered in the Fall when most of us are back on campus, we would like as much of the preliminary work (like the framing of productive questions) to be completed this summer, so that the Survey itself can get off to a quick start in the Fall. We understand, however, that this is entirely in your hands.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

Treadwell Ruml, Chair
CSUSB Faculty Senate

909.537.5028 • fax: 909.537.7008 • <http://senate.csusb.edu>

5500 UNIVERSITY PARKWAY, SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92407-2393

Academic Affairs
Faculty Senate

**RESOLUTION OF REQUEST TO CHANCELLOR TIMOTHY WHITE FOR ASSISTANCE IN ASSESSING
AND ADDRESSING POTENTIAL ISSUES IN OUR CAMPUS CLIMATE: A RESPECTFUL REQUEST FOR
HELP**

BE IT RESOLVED: The Faculty Senate of California State University, San Bernardino, urges Chancellor White to undertake a prompt review of governance at CSUSB. The review should include a campus climate survey conducted in a manner that allows faculty, staff, administrators and recently (last three years) separated employees of the University to respond with complete assurance and confidence in confidentiality; and

BE IT RESOLVED: The review and climate survey should include, but must not be limited to, assessment of allegations of a climate of fear, distrust and bullying across all levels of the University, as well as attitudes and behaviors related to both shared governance and shared leadership in the areas of student success, academic excellence, and university budget. We urge the Chancellor's office that the results of the review and climate survey be used to develop, if warranted, an action plan to help the CSUSB community advance our mission while ensuring that our CSUSB Core Values are followed.

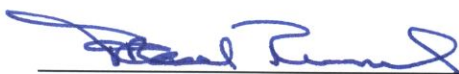
BE IT RESOLVED: The Faculty Senate of CSUSB make this request with the utmost respect and with the goal of constructive outcomes that allow us to move forward collegially in our mission to serve students.


***Rationale:** In the past three years we have witnessed a steady decline in morale as it has become evident that our core values of transparency, respect, and integrity are increasingly absent in the daily operations of the University. Faculty and staff are especially concerned about an increase in fear and bullying across all levels of the University. Left unaddressed, this climate of fear and distrust will have paralyzing effects on the faculty and threaten the accomplishment of our mission to ensure student learning and success and cultivate the professional, ethical, and intellectual development of our students, faculty and staff so they thrive and contribute to a globally connected society.*

In addition to the climate of fear and distrust, there are now serious rifts in both shared governance and shared leadership. Our highly respected provost was recently abruptly terminated and this event seems to have served as the "last straw" for many people. During the past weeks the Faculty Senate has received widespread concerns about personnel and academic decisions made in the past three years and the way in which these decisions were made and communicated. During the past three years, our values of transparency and honest consultation (that is, a discussion of what is being decided) have been violated and, as a result, the important relationship between faculty and administration is impaired, threatening the fulfillment of our core mission.

We respectfully request your help. We are committed to resolve the issues that may become evident from the climate survey in a way that is collegial and respectful to our culture of shared governance and shared leadership. The emotional and physical health of CSUSB is of great importance to us and we are dedicated to achieve a constructive outcome with no preconceived vision.

FSD 14-26


Treadwell Ruml, Chair


Date

THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR



BAKERSFIELD

July 28, 2015

CHANNEL ISLANDS

Dr. Treadwell Ruml
Faculty Senate Chair

CHICO

California State University, San Bernardino
5500 University Parkway

DOMINGUEZ HILLS

San Bernardino, California 92407-2393

EAST BAY

Dear Chair Ruml:

FRESNO

I reviewed your June 29, 2015 'FSD 14-26' that requests my review of California State University, San Bernardino governance. I have reflected on the resolution, and discussed it with President Morales. It is noteworthy that the Senate, President and the senior leadership team care deeply about the future of CSUSB, as do I. I also commend your commitment to student success, and faculty and staff success, through shared governance – again a commitment shared by President Morales and myself.

FULLERTON

HUMBOLDT

LONG BEACH

LOS ANGELES

MARITIME ACADEMY

Your voice has been heard and the concerns are acknowledged. My understanding has been informed in multiple ways, including:

MONTEREY BAY

- Resolution FSD 14-26 and your cover letter
- Conversations that I and other new members of my senior leadership have benefited from when visiting campus
- My annual conference and other discussions with the president

NORTHRIDGE

POMONA

SACRAMENTO

President Morales began his service as president in 2012 following the long service of his predecessor. It is inevitable and desirable that a new president bring in fresh ideas and style. 2012 was also a time when the national recession was continuing to take its toll on the CSU. For several years now it has not been an easy time in public higher education in California, and we still have not recovered the resources we had before the recession. This new environment has changed the way in which we go about designing and executing our future. I acknowledge, understand and appreciate the leadership change and new reality creates stress within a community of scholars, and I surmise it is part of the reason the resolution was drafted.

SAN BERNARDINO

SAN DIEGO

SAN FRANCISCO

SAN JOSÉ

SAN LUIS OBISPO

SAN MARCOS

I also know that the President's change in the provost position was a decision that some members of the community wished had not occurred, while agreeing such a decision is the responsibility and authority of the president. And, of course in any personnel matter there is much to such a decision, which by both law and

SONOMA

STANISLAUS

Dr. Treadwell Ruml

July 28, 2015

Page 2

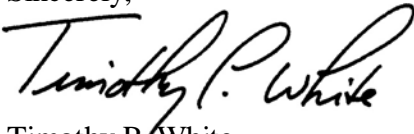
professional courtesy cannot be discussed by the university. Consequently, the hallway conversations are not possibly fulsome and accurate, but rather one-sided. So I surmise that based on the timing of this resolution that decision was a precipitating factor.

Shared governance – shared leadership as I prefer to imagine the construct – does not mean shared decision-making. It means informed decision-making considering the facts, needs, opinions and advice. Faculty have authority, responsibility and accountability in many areas of the university, as do deans, chairs, vice presidents and the president.

In this vein of being cross-informed, I know it to be the case that the President attends the vast majority of Faculty Senate meetings. He gives a President's Report followed by discussion, meets informally with you and other members of the senate from time to time. The President engages with individual academic department chairs, works closely with the associated students leadership, and engages consultative processes around fees. He has established a budget advisory council that includes stakeholders from throughout the fabric of campus, had a faculty senate member co-chair the strategic planning advisory committee, and seeks senate and student appointees on the major search committees, etc.

As you know I feel strongly about the merits of shared governance, and I concur with the importance of working together as a campus community to address issues that arise. Based on my experiences here and over my career, such conversations are best done by the campus community, particularly one as accomplished as California State University, San Bernardino.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy P. White". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'T'.

Timothy P. White
Chancellor

c: President Tomás D. Morales, CSU San Bernardino



Academic Affairs
Faculty Senate

August 15, 2015

Dr. Timothy E. White
Chancellor, California State University
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, CA 90802-4210

Dear Chancellor White:

Thank you for your letter of July 28, 2015. We may not have been adequately clear about what we were asking. We were *not* asking for a review of President Morales, but of the campus climate at Cal State, San Bernardino, which we know to have deteriorated seriously during the past three years. For example, as recently as 2012, CSUSB appears to have made the list of *The Chronicle of Higher Education's* "Great Places to Work," but hasn't since. President Morales probably doesn't have as clear a sense of this deterioration as we do because, like anyone else in his position, he is surrounded by people who have an interest in keeping him happy, no matter how vigorously he has tried to assure them that he is open to disagreement and unpleasant news.

We entirely agree that "hallway conversations" are not highly reliable, which is why we asked your help to get better information. Our trouble is that many staff, in particular, but also many faculty and students have grown afraid of saying anything that might displease their supervisors. Nevertheless, we intend to follow your advice of doing what we can as a "campus community." One part of this has involved faculty with scholarly expertise in the subject preparing a climate survey. For our survey results to be viewed as face valid, however, we need the survey to be hosted by a source seen as not directly affected by the results. We felt that a survey hosted by your office would have been best to serve that purpose, but if that is not possible, would your office be willing to host the web site for the electronic version of the survey we are preparing?

Please let me know.

Many thanks.

Sincerely,

Treadwell Ruml
Chair, Faculty Senate
California State University, San Bernardino

cc: President Tomas D. Morales

909.537.5028 • fax: 909.537.7008 • <http://senate.csusb.edu>

5500 UNIVERSITY PARKWAY, SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92407-2393

From: [Treadwell Ruml II](#)
To: [White, Timothy](#)
Cc: [Tomás Morales](#); [Juan Delgado](#); [steven filling](#); [Walton, Lars](#); [jdarin@csusb.edu](#); [Hernandez, Leticia](#); [Tracy Wise](#); [Janette Garcia](#); [Dorothy Chen](#); [Yasha Karant](#); [Janine Kremling](#); [Haakon Brown](#); [Beth Steffel](#); [Nena Torrez](#); [Jodie Ullman](#); [Karen Kolehmainen](#); [Kathie Pelletier](#); [Janet Kottke](#); [Christina Massey](#)
Subject: Re: CSUSB Resolution Requesting Assistance
Date: Friday, September 4, 2015 5:40:55 PM

Tim,

Thanks for your reply.

While we had not understood that it would be inappropriate for your office to host a climate survey, our intention in asking was precisely to acquire "a critical, unimpassioned eye to weed out" "intended or unintended biases." Of course, we would not have asked for a climate survey in the first place had we not perceived there to be a serious problem with the campus's climate. A perception, however, is not a "bias" unless it is improperly acted upon, and we have been trying very hard to prevent that from happening, as I believe our seeking your office's assistance demonstrates pretty clearly.

I will forward your post to the head of our climate survey committee. When the Faculty Senate Executive Committee meets officially in a couple of weeks, we will decide where to go from here. It would be helpful if your office could provide us with further information about the "three-year review" works, so we can see that we are as helpful in that process as possible. Thanks.

Regards,

Ted

On 9/4/2015 4:56 PM, White, Timothy wrote:

Ted,

In reply to your letter dated August 19, 2015 , the Chancellor's Office is not in a position to host a campus climate survey, nor is it appropriate to do so. I have attached my July reply to your earlier correspondence for ease of reference.

The campuses that have conducted climate surveys either host their own or often times engage a third party vendor. While I am not a social scientist, I do know that one key element at the core of a valid survey is the care, professionalism and objectivity that goes into the construct of the instrument, both individual questions and themes, as well as the overall arc of the instrument. Intended or unintended biases require a critical unimpassioned eye to weed out... the reason I raise this issue is because in your letter dated August 15 (attached) you state categorically "...campus climate...we know to have deteriorated...".

If you move forward with a survey, I suggest doing so in the spirit of shared governance with the involvement of administration, senate, and human resources, as well as engaging an outside entity to help design and administer the instrument.

As you may be aware, President Morales is undergoing the normally scheduled three-year review as President this academic year. In that process, driven by Trustee policy, I request written input from all members of the campus and community in six areas of performance. The call for input gets released after your academic year begins, and the due date for input will be late October.

I personally review all of the inputs, and summarize them (sans attribution) for discussion with the president and the board of trustees. So this fall will be an opportunity for a wide range of voices to be heard in an organized process.

Sincerely,

Tim

Timothy P. White, Chancellor
The California State University
Office of the Chancellor
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, CA 90802
562.951.4700

From: Treadwell Ruml [<mailto:truml@csusb.edu>]
Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2015 12:21 PM
To: White, Timothy
Cc: Tomás Morales; jdelgado@csusb.edu; steven filling; Walton, Lars; jdarin@csusb.edu; Hernandez, Leticia; Tracy Wise; Janette Garcia; Dorothy Chen; Yasha Karant; Janine Kremling; Haakon Brown; Beth Steffel; Nena Torrez; Jodie Ullman; Karen Kolehmainen; kpelleti@csusb.edu
Subject: Re: CSUSB Resolution Requesting Assistance

Tim,

I am sending a hard copy of the attached letter to you and to Tomás today by regular mail.

Regards,

--
Treadwell Ruml
Professor of English and Faculty Senate Chair
California State University, San Bernardino
5500 University Parkway
San Bernardino, CA 92407
(909) 537-5886

This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.



www.avast.com