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2020

## What is a Vote of No Confidence?

CSUSB Faculty Senate

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### Recommended Citation

CSUSB Faculty Senate, "What is a Vote of No Confidence?" (2020). *Faculty Senate records*. 223.  
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## WHAT IS A VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE?

Wikipedia description of a motion of no confidence:

A **motion of no confidence** (alternatively **vote of no confidence**, **no-confidence motion**, or **(unsuccessful) confidence motion**) is a statement or vote that a person or persons in a position of responsibility (government, managerial, etc.) is no longer deemed fit to hold that position: perhaps because they are inadequate in some respect, are failing to carry out obligations, or are making decisions that other members feel are detrimental.

References to some other university votes of no confidence:

CSU Sonoma and CSU Sacramento (2007)

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2007/05/30/sonoma>

Fordham University (April 2017)

<https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2017/04/21/no-confidence-vote-fordham>

Database of university votes of no confidence:

<http://www.seanmckinniss.org/no-confidence-vote-database/>

## HOW WILL THE SENATE ASSURE THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF VOTING?

Voters will seal their completed ballots in inner envelopes that contain no identifying information, and then seal the inner envelopes inside outer envelopes that bear the signature and printed name of the voter. Both inner and outer envelopes are “security envelopes,” meaning the contents can’t be read by holding up to a bright light.

Each voter should deposit his/her ballot envelope (by hand if possible) into one of the locked ballot boxes marked “Referendum,” located in each College office. The keys to the ballot boxes are being held by the college elections officers.

As soon as possible after the deadline for returning ballots, a team of at least three elections officers or senators will pick up the ballot boxes from the college offices and return them to a central location for counting. President Morales will be invited to have a witness present.

The name of each voter will be read off the outer envelope and marked on a list of eligible voters supplied by Academic Personnel. This is done to ensure that all ballots come from eligible voters, and that no voter has voted more than once.

The outer envelopes are then opened and set aside, and the inner envelopes (still sealed and with no voter information) are removed. The inner envelopes are then opened, and the ballots are counted.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE?

Voting eligibility is specified in the Faculty Senate constitution. Eligible voters include tenured faculty, tenure track faculty, librarians, counselors, and full time lecturers with an annual or 3-year contract.

Part time lecturers are not allowed to vote under the current constitution. FERPing faculty are eligible to vote.

## **HOW HAS THE FACULTY SENATE COMMUNICATED WITH FACULTY PRIOR TO THE VNC?**

Senate agendas are posted to campus before each meeting, and each agenda item is accompanied by a link where campus constituents are asked to provide input. Agendas and minutes for both the Senate and its Executive Committee are posted on the senate website (<http://senate.csusb.edu/>). Most senators take their roles as elected representatives of their colleagues seriously, and they speak to their constituents regularly about senate issues.

The Senate passed a resolution of rebuke of President Morales, citing a “remarkable lack of respect,” in June 2015, (See [http://senate.csusb.edu/Resolutions/\(FSD14-25\)Resolution\\_Rebuke.PDF](http://senate.csusb.edu/Resolutions/(FSD14-25)Resolution_Rebuke.PDF)). Like all senate resolutions, this was forwarded to the campus.

The Senate has held a series of faculty open forums addressing the major concerns raised in the resolution of no confidence. The dates, times, locations, and the major topics at these open forums are:

6/16/15, 4-6pm, SBS-212, firing of Provost Bodman

6/18/15, 12-2pm, VA-101, firing of Provost Bodman

6/10/16, 2-4pm, COE-105, state of the campus

11/9/16, 4-6pm, CH-135, direct instructional load under semesters

3/13/17, 10am-12 noon, Panorama Room, progress towards meeting the goals of the strategic plan, particularly regarding tenure density and the student-to-faculty ratio (SFR)

5/16/17, 9-11am, SMSU Theatre, referendum on the vote of no confidence

At each open forum during the last two years, there was a discussion of the possibility of a vote of no confidence.

## **HOW HAS THE FACULTY SENATE SOUGHT HELP FROM BEYOND OUR CAMPUS?**

After the elected senate leadership had received anonymous pleas for help, the Faculty Senate passed a resolution in June 2015 calling for help from the Chancellor’s Office. (See [http://senate.csusb.edu/Resolutions/\(FSD14-26\)Resolution\\_climate\\_survey.PDF](http://senate.csusb.edu/Resolutions/(FSD14-26)Resolution_climate_survey.PDF)). The resolution specifically asked the Chancellor to host a campus climate survey. The Senate Chair transmitted that information to Chancellor White, but the Chancellor declined to help. (See <http://senate.csusb.edu/docs/RequestsforHelp&Responses.pdf> ).

As a result, the CSUSB Faculty Senate commissioned a climate survey carried out by a team of faculty who are experts in survey design and analysis. The survey results were sent to the Chancellor’s Office. Senate EC members have also discussed campus climate issues with several visiting Trustees and provided them with executive summaries of the survey results.

## **DID AN ADMINISTRATOR RECORD THE OPEN FORUM ON MAY 16?**

Yes. The administration disavows prior knowledge of this. Provost McMahan responded promptly to the situation, and we have been told that the recording has been erased.

## **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

The vote of no confidence is not binding, but it is a strong symbolic statement. We expected that the Chancellor's public response would be supportive of the President, because that is what has happened in previous votes of no confidence in the CSU system. It is quite possible that an entirely different conversation is happening behind closed doors. In previous votes of no confidence within the CSU, eventual consequences have ranged from the president stepping down to the president making major positive changes that eventually led to a vote of confidence.