

CSM Academic Senate Statement of Values and the Diversity of Faculty Work

College of San Mateo faculty have convened as a body in various formats for nearly the entire history of the college. In 100 years, faculty leadership have come from diverse discipline areas to represent the faculty perspective and purview in the college.

Language has power. The language that is codified in participatory governance, district, and contractual documents that separate "instructional" and "non-instructional" faculty is divisive and has contributed to the marginalization and disparagement of "non-instructional" faculty.

This impact is also felt acutely among our BIPOC faculty, who are overwhelmingly represented among "non-instructional" faculty categories. The college, and faculty leadership especially, need to recognize the detrimental impact of this division as an equity issue – when our BIPOC faculty are marginalized, essential voices are silenced to the detriment of our students, our peers, and our institution.

Faculty work is not limited to teaching in classrooms but also includes the work of assistive technology specialists, counselors, early childhood education coordinators, instructional designers, learning disability specialists, librarians, nurses, personal counselors, and professional development faculty coordinators.

Unfortunately, in using the "non-instructional" label, there is also an incorrect assumption that faculty in these roles do not teach classes and that faculty work outside the classroom is somehow less valuable. This incorrect assumption has caused division where none need exist. All faculty contribute to the college, and ultimately the success of all students.

We look to Academic Senate leadership to address this division and formally codify the mission, vision, and values of Academic Senate to reflect that:

1. Equity-minded leadership embodies advocacy, transparency, support, and consistent communication. Leadership should demonstrate respect for colleagues, encourage participation and inclusion of diverse voices and disciplines.
2. Leadership engages in advocacy, a willingness to challenge the status quo, as well as an awareness of and willingness to address implicit bias and power dynamics.
3. Leaders who strive to become knowledgeable about all aspects of faculty work better support and represent all faculty.
4. Leaders who are willing to engage in vigorous debate and engage in difficult conversations using reflective leadership practices make changes to the status quo.
5. Leaders who change and improve senate practices support the space for those voices to be heard and support those who might be inexperienced in their leadership roles.
6. Leadership strives to exhibit an openness to new ideas, perspectives, and approaches.

7. Transparency in the communication of ideas fosters a culture of trust and openness.

In addition, we request that the CSM Academic Senate take action and commit to the following to support our values:

1. Change our local language to describe the fullness of faculty work.
2. Remove divisive language from all participatory governance documents and other areas where it is currently codified as it has served to be harmful to collegiality and collaboration among the faculty.
3. Invest in formal leadership skills training to support any faculty who want to make governance and institutional change.
4. Actively engage and support faculty from diverse backgrounds and experiences as faculty leaders.
5. Improve senate practices to support the space for those voices to be heard and support those who might be inexperienced in their leadership roles, including mentoring.

We've asserted our values and from that foundation, we ask DAS to do or support the following:

1. Publicly assert that "non-instructional" faculty play a vital role in senate, and disavow statements to the contrary.
2. Affirm that DAS will represent all SMCCD faculty and will promote the inclusion of leaders from various backgrounds and experiences to represent all faculty.
3. Affirm that DAS will empower faculty from diverse backgrounds and experiences in order to promote inclusiveness and equity in all of their forms.
4. Convene a joint DAS/AFT committee to explore the impact of removing "instructional" / "non-instructional" language from our SMCCD vocabulary, including from all participatory governance documents and other areas where it is currently codified, as it has served to be harmful to collegiality and collaboration among the faculty.
5. Invest in formal leadership skills training to support any faculty who want to make governance and institutional change.