



9th April 2024

Locations: 3600 Workman Mill Road, Room LR128, Whittier, CA/3000 San Gabriel Blvd., Rosemead, CA 91770/ 7226 Hamner Ave, Eastvale, CA 91752/840 East Whittier Blvd, La Habra, CA. 90631/ 18 W Sierra Madre Blvd # A, Sierra Madre, CA 91024/ 214 W Rt 66, Glendora, CA 91740/ 101 The City Dr., Orange, CA 92868/ 1370 Veteran Avenue # 104, Los Angeles, CA 90024/22 W. Live Oak Ave., Arcadia, CA, 91007

Attendance: Kevin Barman, Marissa Berru-Licon, Brian Brutlag, Wendy Carrera, Libby Curiel, Melanie Fierro, Erin Irwin, Shirley Isaac, George Kimber, Michael Koger, David Lindy, Jeannie Liu, Kelly Lynch, Sheila Lynch, Marina Markossian, Angelica Martinez, Farrah Nakatani, Tyler Okamoto, Dorali Pichardo-Diaz, Angela Medina Rhodes, Jasmine Rodriguez, Mutsuno Ryan, Aditi Sapra, Diego Silva, Kevin Smith, Shelly Spencer, Diana Valladares, Viviana Villanueva, George Wheeler

Ad Hoc Members Present: Diana Valladares, Elizabeth Ramirez

Members Absent: Bill Curington, Shari Herzfeld, Mike Hinze, Jorge Huinquez, Steve Johnson, Vic Kowalski, Young Lee, Cynthia Lewis, Carley Mitchell, Gerson Montiel, Katie O'Brien, Sandra Obenberger, Dianna Reyes, Rudy Rios

Guests: Zachary Jensen

1. Call to order
 - a. Meeting called to order at 1:05pm
2. Public Comment: Persons wishing to address the Academic Senate on any item on the agenda or comment on any other matter are allowed three minutes per topic. Pursuant to the Brown Act, the Academic Senate cannot discuss or take action on items not listed on the agenda. Matters brought before the Academic Senate that are not on the agenda may, at the Senate's discretion, be referred to the Senate Executive Council or placed on the next agenda.
 - a. No public comment
3. President's Report
 - a. Discussion: Update on AP 7259
 - i. A. Rhodes emailed senators with an email update that AP 7259 went to PPC. PPC went through line-by-line, as outlined in the Shared Governance Manual. It then went to PFC. PFC had one meeting with the AP on the agenda. A. Rhodes and VP Miller were not present. PFC made it through page 3 of the AP. A memo was written and forwarded to President Flores, despite the process not being completed. The AP is now on the next Board agenda as an informational item. A. Rhodes had previously outlined steps Senate should take. Senate has taken those steps and has met multiple times with President Flores and asked

President Flores to go with PPC's recommendation. President Flores declined. A. Rhodes said that President Flores feels the AP proceeding as-is is a move towards equity. A. Rhodes was told not to contact the Board of Trustees. A. Rhodes contacted the Board and shared with Senate the letter that was sent (Appendix A). A. Rhodes did hear from the Board president and will speak with her after the next PFC meeting after the current Senate meeting.

- ii. S. Lynch pointed out the current AP that is in place and Administration believes it cannot be used because of the EEO plan. S. Lynch finds this claim to be specious. This "fact" is not stated anywhere. A. Rhodes confirmed this
- iii. E. Irwin asked if the Board would be voting on it. A. Rhodes replied that the Board does not vote on Informational Items. E. Irwin asked if they will be voting on it. S. Lynch asked what happens if the AP remains on the Board agenda. The AP is put into practice.
- iv. L. Curiel shared that the AP, if it were pulled, would have to still go through the Governance process. A. Rhodes said she would make that ask very clear with the Board president if the AP is pulled from the agenda and to be respectful of the process
- v. S. Lynch said that the most recent PFC meeting that was held was a special meeting. Consensus was not met. S. Lynch asked if it was proper for something to be moved forward. A. Rhodes said yes, motions can be made and can stand. However, for them to move an AP forward that is incomplete does not follow the process. S. Lynch said, at the very least, if the Senate President and the Vice President cannot be there, the majority present at PFC is weighted towards the administrators who were present
- vi. A. Rhodes provided background on the special PFC meeting. There has been pressure to get the AP through with meeting after meeting. Yet, faculty have been told they are stalling. B. Brutlag said that was gaslighting. L. Curiel said it's also coercion. L. Curiel's concern is that the actual, actionable items as recommended by the EEO Plan are not being followed. HR admitted in the PFC meeting that they want to follow the model of another college, rather than the EEO plan that was recommended. The biggest issue appears to be with HR.
- vii. A. Rhodes believe the biggest driver is Goal #1. The Board wants President Flores to pass this and other hiring APs
- viii. L. Curiel pointed out that Laney College censured their president for not working with faculty. L. Curiel's concern with censure, or even no confidence, is that the Board is driving this and the issue is with the Board
- ix. D. Silva asked for clarification if the Board is driving this specific AP or just any hiring AP. There is a clear path to be followed and the Board is aware of faculty's stance
- x. L. Curiel asked about the Board's education on the process. The Board are elected by the community and may be unaware of the process and the potential ramifications. A. Rhodes said she does not know what the Board knows. L. Curiel

then asked if there is a way to educate the Board on the process. A. Rhodes said Board President would like to discuss this with her. The Board President is responsible for disseminating information to the rest of the Board. L. Curiel felt the Board might want to be educated on the process. B. Brutlag feels the Board knows what they are doing and may be using President Flores as a shield to push the Board's actual agenda. These decisions affect staff and faculty livelihoods without considering staff and faculty

- xi. K. Smith shared that this has long been a Board goal, going back several presidents, that they have consistently pointed to the lack of diversity among Deans, and there is no clear indication as where this is coming from. L. Curiel pointed out that the AP is antithetical to what the Board is trying to accomplish and the current AP will likely reproduce what the Board is trying to accomplish
- xii. A. Rhodes gave great appreciation to D. Pichardo-Diaz for her help in writing this letter, along with the rest of the Exec board
- xiii. W. Carrera shared that when A. Rhodes speaks to the Board President to present the information clearly and concisely. The Board President needs to be able to then convey clearly and concisely the message that A. Rhodes wants to convey.
- xiv. L. Curiel asked if faculty should give Public Comment at the Board meeting to convey the message and biggest points from the letter and convey the points that actually move the message forward. W. Carrera felt that was a great idea because the Board will want to hear from the faculty and that may start some questioning. However, the Board is the President/Superintendent's boss, which may explain some of the pressure President Flores is feeling. W. Carrera said it may be prudent for different faculty members to approach different Board members.
- xv. K. Smith said, according to The Brown Act, that the Board President would have to announce publicly at the meeting who she spoke with and what she learned. She cannot discuss this behind closed doors with each Board member individually in private. A. Martinez echoed W. Carrera's point if any faculty know any Board members to reach out to them to provide that context
- xvi. S. Lynch said the Board's goal sounds like to follow the EEO Plan and increase diversity. HR is then pushing their plan to achieve that goal, but the Board might not know there are other ways to achieve that goal, as outlined in the EEO plan
- xvii. As an Informational Item, the Board can provide guidance and direction which President Flores would then have to follow
- xviii. Whereas, the current AP 7259 is antithetical to the EEO Plan;
- xix. Whereas, the shared governance process has not been respected;
 - 1. Motion: The Academic Senate moves to censure President Marilyn Flores for actions regarding AP 7259
 - a. First K. Smith/ Second B. Brutlag
 - b. Motion passes with one abstention

4. Adjournment
 - a. Meeting adjourned at 2:17pm

Appendix A

April 8, 2024

Dear Board of Trustees,

As you are aware there has been an ongoing discussion about AP 7259. The Academic Senate is very unhappy with the process and Dr. Flores' recommendations. Before the Senate meets to discuss the process and outcome, I wanted to make you aware as I am trying to avoid a vote of No Confidence. For the following reasons, the Academic Senate requests that you pull item M1 from the April 10th agenda for additional discussion and problem-solving.

1. Faculty being marginalized: The diversity of hiring committees will be greatly limited. The number of faculty on Academic Deans, Directors, and Supervisors hiring committees has been significantly reduced. In the previous policy, faculty in the respective areas who wanted to participate on the hiring committee were afforded the opportunity to do so. The process ensured that no voice was ever hand-picked, minimized, or denied an opportunity to engage in the hiring committee. Instead, it valued diversity in voices and perspectives. The proposed AP will now limit faculty voice to only 4 faculty members. The faculty leadership generously engaged in dialogue to negotiate and work towards a solution to bringing down the number of faculty allowed on these committees, those recommendations were ignored. This is a huge change and a highly problematic one. As you know, the diversity of the college lies with the faculty and the staff. First, there is no indication on the EEO plan that suggests that limiting faculty voice will increase diversity in faculty hires. The EEO plan states *"increase the diversity of representation and student participation in screening and selection committees will likely result in more equitable outcomes for candidates from communities of color."* In fact, faculty have been intentional in their diversity training to ensure that administrator hires are diverse, and it is evident in the 4 VP hires and superintendent/president hire we have today. To restrict the number of faculty is to restrict diversity, which is the opposite of the intention. We all want to increase the diversity of the campus. Limiting faculty voice on hiring committees is not a data driven decision. The faculty implores you to review and strongly consider the impact of this decision.
2. Impact on current BIPOC Faculty: This policy has already affected the morale of the faculty. They feel that their voices have been silenced, in particular BIPOC faculty in leadership. Members of PPC and PFC regrettably feel that their significant time and resources invested in this process have been undervalued and overlooked.

3. Process not followed: This policy did not follow the established process for making recommendations on BPs and APs. The Policy and Procedure Council (PPC) did not come to consensus, it was forwarded to Dr. Flores with an explanation of why. After PPC this policy went to a special Planning and Fiscal Council (PFC) meeting for review. PFC only read 3 of 24 pages. This committee has ALWAYS done their due diligence and completed full reviews of AP's and BP's before sending a recommendation forward. Dr. Flores added the policy to the Board agenda, despite PFC not completing their charge. This action is in direct opposition to the established procedure.
4. Undermining DEIA for Logistics: The focus of the administration seems to be how to schedule so many committee members, but the trade-off is that diverse voices are lost. The rationale given to faculty as to why they have to limit faculty participation on hiring committees has been logistical and personal preferences, not DEIA or data focused. If we want to maximize opportunities to be inclusive and truly value the student voice on hiring committees, we need to be nimble and thoughtful in scheduling so that students and faculty can thrive in teaching and learning, while still being afforded the opportunity to be on hiring committees. True DEIA efforts don't strive to be convenient, they strive to be inclusive.
5. Not a Data Driven Decision: The EEO plan explicitly indicates that the things that are more likely to contribute to our workforce diversity and greater student success are:
 - a. Remove personally-identifiable information from application materials
 - b. Explicit and implicit bias training
 - c. Diversify screening committee membership
 - d. DEIA criteria in application screening
 - e. Include DEIA measures in rubricsNone of these EEO plan recommendations include minimizing faculty participation on hiring committees. What is the status of these efforts?
6. Faculty as scapegoats: The EEO monitor on hiring committees already has the authority to diversify a hiring committee, there is no data showing that they have ever identified a committee as not diverse enough or data indicating that they intervened if it was not diverse enough. There is no data indicating that RHC has been committed and engaged in focused recruitment efforts to attract qualified candidates of color. The college can use outside of the box efforts to recruit diverse candidates such as posting in the American Association of Blacks in Higher Education or Hispanic Association for Colleges and Universities. Instead of expending so much energy on a non-data driven decision, such as limiting faculty voice, the campus should be invested in the data driven recommendations that came from the EEO plan.

It is my hope that the Board will contemplate the repercussions of allowing AP 7259 in its current form. Please feel free to reach out (arhodes@riohondo.edu) if you have any questions or would like to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

Angela Medina Rhodes
Academic Senate, President