Meeting of the Academic Senate
Tuesday, January 14, 1997
UU220, 3-5:00pm

I. Minutes: none.

II. Communication(s) and Announcement(s):

III. Reports:
A. Academic Senate Chair:
B. President's Office:
C. Provost's Office:
D. Statewide Senators:
E. CFA Campus President:
F. Staff Council representative:
G. ASI representatives:
H. IACC representative:
I. Athletics Governing Board representative:
J. Other:

IV. Consent Agenda:

V. Business Item(s):

VI. Discussion Item(s):
PROPOSITION 209: This Academic Senate meeting has been called for the purpose of discussing the current state of Proposition 209 as well as possible strategies and plans the university might undertake to mitigate the effects of this proposition on campus diversity. President Baker and several other administrators will be in attendance for this discussion.

VII. Adjournment:
Memorandum

To: Dr. Charles Lindahl
   Interim Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
   The California State University
   400 Golden Shore
   Long Beach, CA 90802-4275

From: Paul J. Zingg
      Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Subject: Proposition 209

Date: November 26, 1996

As you requested at the VPAAs meeting last week, I am pleased to provide a copy of an op-ed piece of mine that appeared in the San Luis Obispo County Telegram-Tribune on October 23, 1996. It addresses some of the issues raised by Prop 209 and underscores key reasons why diversity is a fundamental value of higher education. You are welcome to share this piece, as well as this note, with our VPAA colleagues and whomever else you'd like.

You also asked me to re-state my brief comments at our recent meeting on Cal Poly's response to the questions raised with the passage of 209. These are:

First, we will obey the law as it is clarified for us. We will seek and heed legal guidance in this matter, particularly as 209 relates to federal law and as it is challenged in the courts.

Second, we will continue to fulfill our mission to accommodate students who reflect the diversity of the State of California, who are qualified for admission to Cal Poly, and who seek the promise of higher education.

Third, we will continue our commitment to the educational values that are represented in being a diverse teaching and learning community. (Elements of this point are particularly addressed in the enclosed op-ed piece.)

Thanks for your interest in these remarks, Chuck. I hope others, too, may find them worthy.

Enclosure
This is the season for values. Not the kind that accompany the new fall fashions into the malls or that mark the end-of-summer clearances in the downtown boutiques. No, the values I refer to are geared to attract voters, not to stimulate shoppers. This is an election year and values are grist for the political mill. From the courthouse to the White House, office-seekers spin their own version of individual, family, community, and national values in an attempt to give purpose and meaning to their candidacies.

Talking about values is risky business. After all, the public will occasionally take seriously what is being said and hold accountable those who say it. But in a time when the roots of individual morality are strained, when a climate of moral uncertainty seems to pervade our society, it is worth exploring those values that are particularly fundamental to our identity and character.

Higher education has a vital role in this matter. Yet, unlike the responsibilities of family, religion, and pre-collegiate school settings, the role of higher education focuses less on inculcating values than exemplifying them. This is no more clearly the case than with two values that are at the heart of the academy—diversity and quality.

The commitment to these values is grounded in the reality of the American experience, not just theory. Although the history of racial and ethnic interaction in our country is hardly a source of pride in every respect, it is one that has moved towards inclusion and participation in the socioeconomic and cultural benefits of our society. We are richer for our diversity, even as we are still not completely comfortable with it.

Recognizing, then, that the American democratic agenda is at once continuous and unfinished, institutions of higher education have a critical role to play in preparing students to live and work in an increasingly diverse society in which cultural knowledge and understanding are more important than ever before. That, and the possibility of actually elevating and strengthening society itself, are powerful reasons why colleges and universities seek to enroll the best and brightest from all sectors of our national population. We seek diversity, too, because we want the rich educational environment that it creates to challenge our students and faculty. Students learn much from one another and if we can encourage partnerships in learning we may stimulate enduring friendships and true delight in the differences, as well as the similarities, that characterize us.
September is a seasonal marker for these values at Cal Poly. In welcoming our new students, we are able to determine how successful we have been in bringing both diversity and quality to our campus. Increasingly, they are one and the same. Although we will not know precisely the profile of our new class until our official census is complete in another two weeks, we are confident that it will reflect the trends we have fostered and experienced in the ‘90s. Here are a few highlights:

* Based on percentages of students voluntarily indicating their ethnic background, the non-white student population at Cal Poly has increased from 27.6% in Fall quarter 1990 to 36.6% in Fall quarter 1995. That’s nearly a 33% increase in the diversity of our student population in only a few years.

* While the majority of the other institutions in the California State University system are primarily regional in character, Cal Poly draws its student body form all parts of the state. About 28% of our freshmen this fall will come from the San Francisco Bay Area, 19% from the Los Angeles area, 16% from the Central Valley and 10% from the Central Coast. The rest come from other areas of California, as well as other states and foreign countries.

* Along with this kind of diversity, Cal Poly enrolled its strongest academic class ever as measured by SAT scores and grade point averages in Fall, 1995. These were 1132 and 3.52, respectively. We have extended offers of admission this year to students whose composite testing and GPA profile is very similar, so we expect to match, if not exceed, last year’s performance.

* Insuring that a Cal Poly education is accessible no matter what the economic circumstances of our students is reflected in our financial aid policies and practices. In 1990-91, financial aid awards totaling approximately $27 million were disbursed to 38% of enrolled Cal Poly students. For the 1995-96 academic year, the amount of aid more than doubled to over $55 million and the percentage of students receiving aid reached 63% of our enrolled students. The new Cal Poly Plan dedicates fully one-third of its revenues to student financial aid.

I am keenly aware, of course, that such statistics provide only a suggestion of Cal Poly’s commitment to building a pluralistic and talented community of learners. They are, though, indicative of the kind of lasting and substantial values--including multicultural respect, awareness, and understanding--that we hold most dear. For at stake is something more than pluralism on our campuses. What is really on the line is the extent to which American higher education, through effective persuasion and compelling example, can provide leadership for the nation as we shape the spirit and strength of our society into the next century. Cal Poly welcomes that challenge.
December 13, 1996

Dear Colleague:

Several members of the Board of Trustees of the California State University have received inquiries regarding the new performance pay program in the CSU. In response to questions and comments about this program, it is timely to indicate that the Board believes that employee accountability and productivity programs are appropriate in public institutions. Such programs are particularly well suited to institutions of higher education, like the CSU, which confer tenure to their faculty members.

Most universities and colleges in this country make merit distinctions among their faculty - to question this basic policy makes no more sense than to question the faculty’s right and obligation to grade their students. Speaking on behalf of the Board of Trustees, we are unanimous in our continued commitment to reward demonstrated outstanding faculty performance, and to create incentives to strive for excellence in teaching and scholarship. I am pleased to note that the recipients of many of the awards under the CSU performance pay program include faculty whose excellence in the classroom has been long recognized by their students and faculty colleagues (fundamental mission), as well as faculty that are responsible for research, scholars and creative endeavor which have brought national and international acclaim to the CSU.

The Board is convinced that programs such as the performance pay program enable the CSU to best meet the needs of our students and the public. In the years to come, as we face unprecedented enrollment and budgetary challenges, the public’s demand for employee accountability and productivity programs will remain strong. The Board sees the performance-based pay program as an integral part of the CSU’s overall strategy in meeting these future challenges.

Sincerely,

Martha C. Fallgatter
Chairman
CSU Board of Trustees

cc: Governor Pete Wilson
    Board of Trustees
    Chancellor Munitz
    Chancellor’s Cabinet
    Presidents
    Provosts/Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs
    Vice Presidents of Administration
    Deans of Faculty Affairs/Academic Deans
    CSU Labor Council
    Academic Senate Chair Highsmith
    Campus Academic Senate Chairpersons