

ACADEMIC SENATE
of
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
San Luis Obispo, CA

AS-933-22

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING AN INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION INTO
CHANCELLOR CASTRO’S HANDLING OF THE SEXUAL HARASSMENT
ALLEGATIONS AGAINST FRANK LAMAS**

- 1 WHEREAS, *USA Today* published an investigative report that has raised questions about how
2 Chancellor Joseph Castro, while serving as President of Fresno State University,
3 handled the sexual harassment allegations against Frank Lamas, former Vice
4 President for Student Affairs at Fresno State University¹; and
5
- 6 WHEREAS, Chancellor Castro, on Friday, February 4th, 2022, sent an open letter to the
7 California State University that outlined his handling of the situation involving
8 Frank Lamas, but did not include supporting documentary evidence that provided
9 a full context for his actions; and
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- 11 WHEREAS, State and local groups, both within and without the California State University
12 system, have called for an external and independent investigation of Chancellor
13 Castro’s handling of the sexual harassment allegations against Frank Lamas²; and
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- 15 WHEREAS, The faculty and staff at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, support all members of the
16 campus community who have been subject to sexual harassment, regardless of the
17 privileged position of a perpetrator, and aim to create a culture of accountability
18 on campus and throughout the California State University system; therefore, be it
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- 20 RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate call on the Cal State Board of Trustees to initiate an
21 external and independent investigation into Chancellor Castro’s handling of the
22 sexual harassment allegations against Frank Lamas; and be it further
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- 24 RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate urge the California State University System to
25 reexamine its policies regarding the separation of members of the Management
26 Personnel Plan (MPP) who are subject to ongoing Title IX investigations or have
27 been found in violation of Title IX policies; and be it further
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¹ <https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/investigations/2022/02/03/cal-state-chancellor-joseph-castro-mishandled-sexual-harassment-fresno-state-title-ix-frank-lamas/9109414002/>

² See <https://www.fresnobee.com/opinion/editorials/article258014773.html>;
<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-02-05/csu-seeks-probe-of-chancellors-handing-of-sex-abuse-claims>;
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/investigations/2022/02/04/cal-state-chancellor-under-fire-senator-wants-castro-investigated/6666000001/>; <https://www.visaliatimesdelta.com/story/news/2022/02/05/fresno-students-call-csu-chancellor-joseph-castro-resignation/9316554002/>

29 RESOLVED: That this resolution be transmitted to the Office of the Chancellor, Board of
30 Trustees, Academic Senate of the California State University, and Academic
31 Senate Chairs of the California State University system.

Proposed by: Academic Senate Executive
Committee

Date: February 15, 2022



The California State University

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

To the California State University Community:

As many of you are aware, yesterday a story was published in the national media about the handling of sexual harassment allegations against Fresno State's Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Frank Lamas while I was serving as the campus president. I write to you now believing it to be of utmost importance that I immediately and directly address this matter with the entire CSU community.

Above all, I want to acknowledge the pain suffered by the members of the Fresno State community. To those who were hurt by Dr. Lamas' behavior and actions, I am deeply and profoundly sorry.

In addition, I also recognize that aspects of Dr. Lamas' separation from the university may have exacerbated this pain and caused understandable frustration among the campus community. I am sorry for this. I also want to provide some context in the hope that additional clarity will be helpful to those who are frustrated or confused by the circumstances of his departure.

In 2019, when a formal Title IX complaint was filed against Dr. Lamas, we acted immediately. To protect the campus community, he was removed from campus within four days. We then entered into settlement negotiations for two fundamental reasons: to permanently separate Dr. Lamas from campus as quickly as possible – without a prolonged legal fight – and to bar him permanently from future employment at Fresno State or any CSU campus. As part of the settlement agreement, which was mediated by a respected retired federal judge, I was required to provide Dr. Lamas with a letter of reference. I did so, and included language mentioning the progress the campus had made on student success and outcomes during his tenure. In hindsight, while my motives were to expedite Dr. Lamas' permanent removal from the CSU, I regret agreeing to this aspect of the settlement, knowing that it caused additional pain.

Again, I am sorry for the pain caused by Dr. Lamas' abhorrent behavior and actions, and for any additional hurt and understandable frustration brought about by aspects of the mediated settlement agreement.

I want you – the entire Cal State community – to know that your health, safety and well-being are my first priority. This includes fostering and sustaining an environment free from sexual harassment and all other forms of sexual misconduct. And it also means respectfully and intentionally holding space for all those affected by this behavior. To that end, I am encouraged by the work we have done over the past year, including launching a systemwide review of Title IX compliance and community awareness of Title IX rights and responsibilities – and addressing the so-called “faculty retreat rights” that complicated Dr. Lamas' separation.

But, of course, we must do so much more – to strengthen our survivor support services; to sharpen the tools we have to quickly and effectively respond to incidents that occur; and to appropriately address legal, administrative and procedural barriers that can impede action.

We must do more – and we will do more. I am fully committed to working with our campus presidents and the CSU Board of Trustees on these critically important issues, and I pledge to continue to do so until the California State University becomes a national model for the prevention and redress of sexual misconduct in all its forms.

Sincerely,

Joseph I. Castro
Chancellor



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

MEMORANDUM

To: Thomas Gutierrez
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: March 9, 2022

From: Jeffrey D. Armstrong
President

Copies: Bruno Giberti
Amy Fleischer
Damon Fleming
Maren Hufton
Cynthia Jackson-Elmoore
Al Liddicoat
Christine Theodoropoulos
Andy Thulin
Dean Wendt
Philip Williams

Jeffrey D. Armstrong

Subject: Response to AS-933-22 Resolution Requesting an Independent Investigation Into Chancellor Castro's Handling of the Sexual Harassment Allegations Against Frank Lamas

By way of this memo, I acknowledge the above-entitled Academic Senate resolution.