

Report to the Board of Trustees

March 22, 2017

Christine M. Miller, ASCSU Chair

What would March be without basketball in America? The playoff tournament process has been dubbed March Madness, and even if you're not a basketball fan, it's hard to escape, so I'll use that theme to discuss what the CSU Academic Senate has been up to. Depending on which source you read, this basketball tournament costs anywhere from \$100 million to \$4 billion dollars in lost productivity each March. Stop the madness! Wouldn't you love to capture any piece of that price tag to fund the CSU? At its March meeting, we in the Senate dug deep, got fired up, brought our A-game, and gave 100%-- c'mon, you didn't think I could do this report without clichés, did you?

The last day of our plenary meeting was a real nail-biter as the Senate barely beat the buzzer to act on 13 resolutions that I'll summarize briefly for you. You should know by now I'm not going give up on the clichés, so some common sports idioms will help me connect those resolutions to March Madness.

I'll start first with, "The refs should let 'em play!" This could be said of our adjunct, or contingent faculty, librarians and coaches. AS-3283 recommends that the Senate, CFA, and Chancellor's Office get together to look at models of employment that would provide more job security for these job classifications. I should tell you this resolution was a brick, meaning it hit the rim and bounced off. That's because the Senate decided to refer it back to committee until the report of the Tenure Density Task Force is released. So, you can expect the Senate to pick up the rebound and finish strong at the basket on this resolution in May.

The next resolution, AS-3284, is one where "You can feel the momentum swinging." It has to do with the momentum that's building toward a new direction the CSU is taking with quantitative reasoning. The resolution recommends that the CSU stop using completion of GE Area B4, and/or completion of an Associate's Degree for Transfer, to say that a student is competent in intermediate algebra. Some transfer students are taking a quantitative reasoning pathway that we shouldn't assume can prepare them

for certain math-intensive majors, so we need to start shifting the momentum toward different ways to think about quantitative reasoning.

Next is AS-3285, which endorses the recommendations in a plan called “The \$48 Fix: Reclaiming California’s Master Plan for Higher Education.” Since the plan embraces the principles of the Master Plan, I think a March Madness commentator would say the CSU, UC, and Community Colleges “have to remember what got ‘em here.” The Senate’s resolution urges leaders in all three segments to advocate for tuition-free public higher education via tax reform.

AS-3286 is about graduate education in the CSU. Let’s face it: Graduation Initiative 2025 is an undergraduate initiative, and it is “all heart.” But what about graduate programs? They deserve to get the ball, too! Since this Senate resolution references several prior ones that have asked for focus on issues unique to grad programs, it epitomizes what a coach would say:

“I’m proud of the way we hung in there.” The Senate thinks the CSU should re-examine the ways we’ve hung in there by providing our prior advice on graduate education, and we also think the CSU should set up a task force or working group devoted to examining graduate education.

Let’s call AS-3287 the “underdog” resolution, because it focuses on our Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival, or DACA students. When you think of the challenges they face, it’s hard not to hear the parallels to a coach or a player who says, “Nobody believed in us, but we proved we belong here.” In this resolution, the Senate reaffirmed its commitment to the well-being of all students, including those covered by DACA. We will work to preserve DACA, and advocate for legal and other resources to support these students if it is repealed.

AS-3288 establishes the positions the Senate has adopted on bills in front of the legislature this year. We’ve worked hard to analyze those bills, “shooting from downtown” and “driving to the basket,” identifying the ones we fully support and oppose, as well as those we’ll support or oppose if amended. We have some dark horse bills we’re just ‘watching’ as well.

One of the bills we wholeheartedly support is AB 422 which gives full statutory authority to offer the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree (DNP). During the pilot, CSU DNP programs “got their tickets punched,” and it seems to us to be a waste of resources to dismantle these programs when the need for highly trained nursing faculty is so

great. Therefore, we unanimously approved AS-3289 to send that specific message to state legislators.

Our audience was federal legislators for AS 3290, where we strongly oppose the president's executive orders restricting travel from several Muslim countries. As you know, there was one issued on January 27, and then it was revised on March 6. I guess you could say we're "taking it one game at a time" as we try to keep up with the president's actions.

The last resolution the Senate passed was to commend the organizers and participants who took part in February's Academic Conference. It was a real barnburner, and I think the fans got their money's worth. We hope we can have a three-peat the year after next. Put us in, Coach White, we know what it takes to win this conference game!

So that was a summary of the resolutions we voted on during the meeting, but there were several others introduced in first reading, so I'll briefly tell you what we'll be dribbling down the court until May: We'll be looking at ways to revise CSU policy on quantitative reasoning to incorporate recommendations made by the Task Force you've heard so much about, we'll be finalizing our meeting calendar for next year, we'll be looking at how active learning and high impact practices can be featured in the Graduation Initiative, and we'll be focusing on how to help our students in the military. No doubt there will also be other resolutions we will consider in May, and they'll all be jump balls because we can't tell yet who will take possession, but hopefully they'll end up nothing but net.

Besides our resolutions, we took another important action at our meeting last week: we went through the process of selecting who we would like Governor Brown to consider appointing as the next Faculty Trustee. This is where March Madness brackets come into play. Did you know there is a field of science known as "bracketology?" It's described on Wikipedia, so it must be true! There's even an online program at St. Joseph's University where you can get your certificate in "bracketology." The Senate's brackets for choosing Faculty Trustee candidates weren't nearly that complicated, but the process did result in a Final Two match-up: Dr. Steven Filling from Stanislaus, and Dr. Romey Sabalius from San Jose. Now the game is in the hands of the ref, Governor Brown, and we hope he'll declare the winner soon.

Two other recent things got the Senate's competitive juices flowing in March. One was a letter sent on March 10 from Executive Vice Chancellor Blanchard to campus presidents about system-wide General Education (GE) policy. Since there is a GE Task

Force that recently started its work, many of us thought that letter was out of bounds, so we asked for an instant replay to review the call. Everyone huddled together and had some very productive discussions, which resulted in another letter sent to the Senate on March 15 that clarified the original call. So the time out is over, and everyone is back on the court to engage GE.

The other issue that had the Senate appealing to the zebras is the draft intellectual property policy. I know I've mentioned intellectual property in prior newsletter reports. The faculty have been anxious to review the draft policy, which we know has been passed around the court by a lot of other players for more than a year; but the key player, the faculty, only intercepted the pass in mid-March, with a deadline of just 60 days to shoot the ball in the form of feedback. We called a technical foul, because our next Senate meeting is 73 days later, so we received a 13-day extension. Still, that doesn't give faculty much time at all to review a very complex and legalistic 33-page document, especially since we're coming up on the busiest time of the academic year. I'll tell you, that charity stripe for free throws is looking quite appealing to faculty right now. I'm not sure what kind of response I'll be reporting in May, but this deadline is making us scramble.

These last two issues, the GE and intellectual property policy reviews, have highlighted how important it is to work together as a team in shared governance. If the March Madness tournament is known as The Big Dance in basketball, then shared governance is The Big Dance in the academy. That shared governance dance needs to be coordinated, and cooperative, and find its rhythm, just like basketball. We might step on each other's toes once in a while, but if we play the game right, if we're light on our feet and respect our dance partner, the students emerge as the champions.