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**ASCSU CHAIR'S REPORT**  
**November 2018**  
**Catherine Nelson**

Welcome to the November 2018 ASCSU Plenary! This report provides an update on select events since my last report at our September Plenary.

**Schedule and Trustee Visits**

Alumni Trustee John Nilon will join us this Thursday. Trustees Day, Kimbell and Taylor have indicated an interest in joining us for our January plenary and we are working on making those visits happen. I'm hoping we can schedule Student Trustees Hinton and Garcia for a joint visit at one of our remaining plenaries in 2019. We have an unconscious bias workshop scheduled for Thursday morning. Thanks to our CFA colleagues Audrena Redmond and Cecil Canton for facilitating the workshops.

**Graduation Initiative 2025 All-Work Group Meeting**

As you know, as part of the Graduation Initiative six work groups were created to make recommendations about how best to "improve student success, close equity gaps and increase completion rates." The groups are Academic Preparation, Enrollment Management, Financial Support, Student Engagement and Well Being, Data Driven Decision Making and Administrative Barriers. The groups met collectively in person in Long Beach on Friday, September 21 (I joined virtually). As is consistent with other GI efforts, other than the Academic Preparation group (Early Start, EO implementation), most of the work done has been around administrative/student affairs initiatives rather than on the ground, in the classroom instruction per se. The suggestions all have an impact on students (4 and 2-year completion campaigns, encouraging a 15 unit load, improving advising, improving course registration, reviewing alternative tuition models, more robust use of multi-year degree planners, improving student financial literacy, analyzing the impact of fees on first year students, assessing student engagement activities and spaces, more robust peer advising, continuing basic needs efforts and so on). The Chancellor's Office will evaluate the recommendations based upon their plausibility, propensity to improve degree completion, propensity to close the equity gap and evidence of their effectiveness (that is do they have a reasonable chance of being successful). My understanding is that a summary report will be coming from the Chancellor's Office in mid-November.

**CSU Campuses**

Bakersfield  
Channel Islands  
Chico  
Dominguez Hills  
East Bay

Fresno  
Fullerton  
Humboldt  
Long Beach  
Los Angeles  
Maritime Academy

Monterey Bay  
Northridge  
Pomona  
Sacramento  
San Bernardino  
San Diego

San Francisco  
San José  
San Luis Obispo  
San Marcos  
Sonoma  
Stanislaus

### **Graduation Initiative (GI) 2025**

The Fall 2018 GI 2025 Symposium was held October 17 and 18 at SDSU. I attended along with other members of the Executive Committee and our representatives to the Faculty Innovation Awards Selection Committee (Senators Yee-Melichar, Yudelson and Norman). According to the CO, the symposium was designed to "...engage national higher education leaders, practitioners and members of the CSU community in rich exchanges focused on improving degree completion and addressing equity." Speakers and breakout groups addressed a variety of themes, including the use of data analytics to create a student-centered university; advising for student success; what students want faculty/administrators to now about student success (I would summarize it as "meet students where they are"); rethinking math and quantitative reasoning instruction; and defining true student success using an expansive notion of quality, completion and outcomes. Recent increases in graduation rates were announced as well. Of particular note, EVC Blanchard talked about innovation, including a coming emphasis on "finish in 4, through in 2," increasing the average unit load, increasing advising and structural changes to prevent pinball advising. Chancellor White finished out the symposium with a personalized talk about his takeaways from the conference, which include "change can't be on the margins; students should be our north star; and we're at a point of inflection – the CSU's time is now like never before." (the CSU is leading the country in increasing completion rates and achieving equity). You can watch video of the conference here: <https://www2.calstate.edu/csu-system/why-the-csu-matters/graduation-initiative-2025/symposium/2018-symposium>

My takeaways? The symposium was focused on administrative initiatives and student academic support services. Academic quality and what happens in the classroom were not the central theme. The winners of the Faculty Innovation and Leadership Awards were announced, and there was a break out group on Rethinking the Future of Math and Quantitative Reasoning. And in her ending keynote, WASC Senior College President Jamiene Studely, did talk about how academic quality is the core component of a degree with meaning. I'm left with a conundrum about the nature of the conference. On the one hand, an emphasis on administrative and student support initiatives to improve graduation rates is perfectly appropriate. But following Jamiene Studely, if academic quality is the core component of a degree with meaning one would think that the faculty that delivers the academic mission of the CSU would have a more prominent role in a conference about completion and equity. But as a dean asked me directly, are there many faculty here? To which a faculty colleague responded that intellectual growth wasn't a high priority in this conference. Much of the ASCSU Executive Committee, some campus senate chairs, and the winners of the Faculty Innovation awards and the faculty on the award selection committee were there, but none of us had a speaking role (I asked for some time, much as the ASCSU Chair had last year, but I was told things were being done differently this year so the answer is no). Maybe we need to revitalize the Academic Conference as a bookend to the Symposium so academic quality becomes a more visible a priority of the CSU.

### **California Higher Education Collaborative Conference**

The annual California Higher Education Collaborative Conference was held at Sonoma State University October 1-3. The conference "...brings together administrative leaders and professionals from the three segments of California public higher education to encourage the exchange of ideas and practices, which may improve administrative performance, service, and

outcomes.” As far as I know, I was the only faculty member in the house. The conference was a learning experience in terms of attitudes toward faculty and the state of “shared leadership,” one of Chancellor White’s signature approaches to CSU governance. Worthy of mention are some of the comments made about faculty and the workshop dedicated specifically to shared leadership. The comments about faculty came in a workshop called “Creating Cross Functional Success” which addressed how to transform campus culture to embrace change and innovation. It was refreshing to hear the facilitator say “let faculty be faculty,” and point out that by training faculty are skeptical and independent, shared governance is deliberative and faculty are trained to engage in evidence based decision making. I was less enthused by comments made at the beginning of the “Shared Leadership” workshop where the facilitator pointed out the differences between shared leadership and shared governance. Shared leadership was characterized as being based on trust, active decision making, being proactive and a commitment to the organization. Shared governance was characterized as being based on skepticism/suspicion, gate keeping, being reactive and compliance. Shared leadership was further described as a bottom up, group approach to shared decision making, where leadership is shared based on expertise within teams or groups that identify a particular problem and recommend solutions. Final decision making may reside outside of the group and existing hierarchical decision making structures may remain in place, but everyone in a group takes responsibility for taking an active role in the process and addressing the issue at hand.

### **Assembly Higher Education Committee Hearing on UC Faculty Diversification**

On October 23 Assembly Higher Education Committee Chair Medina held an oversight hearing on the state of diversification of UC faculty. The point of the hearing was to explore current faculty diversity efforts in the UC and how legislative appropriations are being used in pursuit of that goal. The major theme from all presenters was the connection between faculty diversity and student body diversity and success. Campus climate for diverse faculty and students was a major theme as well. The Chair of the UC Student Association, a third year Political Science/Public Policy major at UCSD and a woman of color indicated that of 30 courses she has taken not one was taught by a woman of color. She commented that, “When you don’t see people like you, the message is clear – you don’t belong.” Assembly Member Medina was clear that while he appreciates the UC’s efforts toward diversifying faculty, his patience is running out given that as the student body diversifies the faculty stays the same (predominantly white). A representative from the Campaign for College Opportunity discussed their report, “Left Out,” that is critical of the lack of diversity in the faculty and administration of all three segments of public higher education in California. This is the group that wanted the demographic data for all ASCSU Senators. We didn’t give it to them. But the ASCSU is included in their report. And Member Medina relied on their presentation and report as the basis for several of his comments throughout the hearing. You can find the hearing agenda and supporting materials at: <https://ahed.assembly.ca.gov/committeehearingschedule>

### **CFA Fall Assembly**

The CFA Fall Assembly was October 19-21 in Los Angeles. A couple of items of interest: At the Board of Directors meeting the Legislative Director reported that the legislative staff would “meet with an influential legislator” before deciding whether or not to recommend sponsoring another version of last year’s Weber bill that would mandate a systemwide ethnic studies

graduation requirement for the CSU. Also, a workshop called “Interrupting: An Anti-Racism Workshop” was piloted at the meeting. The workshop follows on their unconscious bias workshops and focuses on how to “interrupt” or confront racism and other discriminatory statements/actions when they happen. It was informative and engaging, and I look forward to the final version when it is rolled out in a campus setting.

### **Other Activities**

I have been invited by the Chancellor to sit on a new Revenue Opportunities Task Force. The task force will explore alternative sources of revenue for the CSU. It grew out of a conversation at the last Board of Trustees meeting about ways to supplement our general fund budget. Our first meeting was September 25. The next meeting is actually Thursday morning, when background information and models from other states will be reviewed. I clearly won’t be able to attend. At the Chancellor’s invitation I will also be serving on the Wang Family Excellence Award Selection Committee. The Committee will begin its work this month and complete its task in early December. Nominations for the award close this Friday, November 9.

In October I also attended the Campus Senate Chairs’ first meeting of the year and the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (along with the rest of the Executive Committee). My thanks to Senator Aloisio for joining me at the September Board of Trustees meeting, and to Senator Schlievert for representing the ASCSU at the October CSSA Board of Directors meeting at CSU Fresno. Also thanks to Senator Soni for representing the ASCSU at the CCC Academic Senate at their 2018 Fall Plenary last week in Irvine, CA, and for representing us at the CSU Legislative Training Conference (for campus government relations directors) at CSU San Marcos on November 16. Senator Aloisio will again be joining me at the Board of Trustees meeting next week.

In conclusion, it is an honor to serve as Chair of the ASCSU and to represent you as we work together to further our academic mission and maintain the vital place of shared governance in the CSU. I am repeatedly in awe of the collective hard work and dedication to public higher education among CSU faculty. That is our legacy and the key to the academic success of our students and the university itself.

Respectfully Submitted,

Catherine Nelson