

**ACADEMIC SENATE
OF
THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY**

AS-3471-21/FA
January 21-22, 2021

**COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**

- RESOLVED:** That the Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU) assert the need for more communication, and more effective communication, between faculty and Trustees in pursuit of more efficient and effective provision of public higher education in California; and be it further
- RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU acknowledge the importance of public participation in conversations concerning the CSU, most especially those occurring as a part of the Board of Trustees (BOT) meetings; and be it further
- RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU urge the Chancellor, Trustees, and the Trustee Secretariat to seek mechanisms that would provide increased opportunity for members of the public to speak to the Trustees; and be it further
- RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU implore the Chancellor and Trustees to open avenues of communication with the faculty of the CSU, including but not limited to hearing from the ASCSU prior to committee votes on issues; and be it further
- RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU distribute this resolution to the CSU Board of Trustees, CSU Chancellor, CSU campus Senate Executive Committees, California Faculty Association (CFA), California State Student Association (CSSA), CSU Emeritus and Retired Faculty & Staff Association (CSU-ERFSA), Governor Newsom, Senate Pro Tem Atkins, Assembly Speaker Rendon, Assembly Higher Education Committee, and the Senate Education Committee.

***RATIONALE:** Current Board practice is to allot 90 minutes to “Public Comment” at Board meetings. Any faculty wishing to address the Board are put into that period as well. Typically, this allows each speaker 1 minute to speak. It should be abundantly clear that the complex issues often at play in BOT decisions cannot be addressed in that time. Quite clearly the Board cannot provide unlimited time for public comment, however we can and must do better. Given that trustees are typically presented with a binder of materials in excess of 250 pages, it seems unlikely that telling members of the public that they can submit written remarks that will be shared with the Trustees will result in genuine consideration of those remarks. It is also the case that when members the Board request clarifications, current practice is to only ask representatives of the Chancellor’s Office for their opinion. Often faculty have differing and more informed opinions but that expertise is rarely being accessed for that purpose.*

As a public institution the CSU should and must enable participation in policy and practice conversations by members of the public. Equally, the CSU should and must acknowledge the primary purview over curriculum by faculty and the need for Trustees to hear the considered counsel of the faculty directly rather than through the translation vector of the Chancellor's Office staff. Timing is also important - currently the ASCSU Chair reports to the Trustees plenary session, which occurs after BOT committees have deliberated on issues before the Board and taken their votes.

Approved – January 21-22, 2021