



# ACADEMIC SENATE

The primary voice of the faculty in academic and professional matters at Santa Rosa Junior College.

## MEETING MINUTES

August 20<sup>th</sup> 2025, 3:15 p.m.

Santa Rosa (NEW): Doyle Media Room 145

Petaluma (usual): Room 690, Richard Call Bldg.

ZOOM ID: 958 4627 3808 / Click [here](#) to start Zoom

**PRESENT** M. Anderman, L. Aspinall, S. Avasthi, L. Branen-Ahumada, K. Bunas, J. Bush, J. Davis, K. Fortunati, K. Frindell Teuscher, G. Garcia, V. Hamilton (Petaluma), T. Jacobson, J. Kremer, D. Lemmer, S. McGregor-Gordon, T. Melvin, J. Nieto, M. Ohkubo, A. Oliver, M. Papa, N. Perrone, N. Persons, S. Rosen (Petaluma), E. Schmidt, J. Stover, I. Tircuit

**ABSENT** A. Atilgan Relyea (proxy M. Ohkubo), L. D. Lukas (proxy E. Schmidt)

**GUESTS** L. Beach

**CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order by President Stover at 3:15 p.m.

**LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT** Land acknowledgement statement was read by Senator Perrone.

### OPEN FORUM

1. **M. Hale:** spoke in favor of the resolution on the agenda, [Resolution in Support of Students' Flexible Attendance and Participation at Santa Rosa Junior College](#). Referenced a Press Democrat quote from 2018 from previous SRJC President Frank Chong, who pledged to resist federal immigration enforcement on campus and protect undocumented students. Urged faculty colleagues to resist rising fascism by practicing empathy as a form of civil disobedience, particularly in support of undocumented students. Citing recent ICE activity in Sonoma County, called on faculty to extend flexibility in attendance, makeup work, and access to materials. Emphasized accommodations are essential to reflect higher education's commitment to justice, freedom, and the community.
2. **M. Vanderport:** Spoke as a citizen concerned about SRJC's marketing. Acknowledged outreach efforts to Hispanics, LGBTQ+, and first-generation students but cautioned that focusing too heavily on specific groups may unintentionally alienate others, including conservative students and those from more traditional backgrounds. Stated that fewer top local high school graduates are enrolling and highlighted demographic groups such as students from two-parent families, conservative families, straight students, and English-proficient students, asking whether SRJC also "welcomes" them.
3. **T. Johnson:** Previous Senator, contract faculty for over 18 years, Disability Resources specialist, and coordinator of the Adapted Physical Education program, thanked those who assisted her intense advocacy for the Senate Chambers transition into a more accessible space for members and guests. Emphasized that this change, achieved after three and a half years of effort, represents meaningful action rather than performative statements. Johnson encouraged colleagues to continue advocating for needed changes with kindness, compassion, and courage, reminding them that their presence and voices make a difference.
4. **A. Garcia:** Superintendent / President of SRJC addressed the Senate to welcome back faculty at the start of the academic year, recognizing students' return across all campuses and sites. Thanked faculty for welcoming all students, whether first-time or continuing learners, and expressed pride in the rollout of the District's new strategic planning initiatives. The priorities highlighted were academic quality,

student success and support, responsiveness to the community, and campus climate and culture. Appreciation was given to senators for their service in strengthening the voice of the college.

#### **JUST CAUSE FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION**

None.

#### **MINUTES** Correction/Adoption.

##### [Minutes of May 7<sup>th</sup> 2025](#)

President Stover noted senators not at the May 7<sup>th</sup> meeting may choose to abstain if they did not attend. Senator Schmidt made a motion to approve the Minutes of May 7<sup>th</sup>, seconded. The [Minutes of May 7<sup>th</sup>](#) were adopted by: 19 yes, 8 abstain votes.

**ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA** Any senator may move any Consent item to the Action agenda to allow for discussion.

None.

#### **REPORTS**

1. [Presidents Report](#)

President Stover...

- Thanked Terry Gutierrez for the [new senate website](#) and thanked Tara Johnson's advocacy for new senate chambers
- Noted Summer Retreat work by the Executive Committee (ASEC):
  - Website content/organization; consultation with MiraCosta College on 16-week semester process; Curriculum Review Committee workload and leadership succession; noncredit-to-credit pathways; Faculty Professional Development Committee revitalization; support for Strategic Plan and revised governance implementation; planning for new Senate Area 14; strategies to support student attendance and participation this fall
- Reviewed agenda items Urgent Resolution supporting flexibility in attendance and universal design accommodations & AP 7120 Contract Faculty Hiring discussions on student and outside faculty participation in hiring committees. Affirmed importance of associate faculty contributions but clarified that awarding "points" to associate faculty in hiring is not permissible under [CCR §53021](#).
- Concluded with appreciation for new senators and a call for engagement in difficult conversations with empathy and respect.

2. [Petaluma Faculty Forum \(PFF\)](#)

A.C. Panella, incoming chair of PFF, provided an update on activities from last semester:

- Met monthly, held a retreat, and prioritized goals including improving office assignments to reflect collaboration and accessibility.
- Supported events such as the We the Future Conference and Student Research Conference.
- Advanced a resolution on Thematic Learning Opportunity, a program connecting academic and student support services; this semester's theme: borders, power, and identity.
- Invited attendance at [their meetings](#) the fourth Tuesday of each month on the Petaluma campus and via Zoom.

**CONSENT** Treated collectively as one Action item. Any senator may move any Consent item to the Action agenda to allow for discussion.

## Resolution in Support of Students' Flexible Attendance and Participation at Santa Rosa Junior College

The vote was taken and the Consent Agenda passed unanimously.

**ACTION:** Items must come from the Discussion agenda of a previous meeting or be carried over from a previous Action agenda.

None.

### **DISCUSSION**

1. [Reorganization of Associate Areas of Representation](#) - *Shall the Associate Areas of Representation be reorganized as outlined in this proposal?*

- President Stover introduced the topic by explaining the reorganization of Areas 12 & 13 into three associate areas: 12, 13, & 14 with around 300 associate faculty members in each Area, referencing future Bylaws and Constitution changes.
- Senator Aspinall made a motion to move the item to Action at the next Senate meeting, seconded. Hearing no discussion on the motion, President Stover called for the vote and the motion passed unanimously.

2. **AP7120 Contract Faculty Hiring Procedure** - *Topics to be Addressed (in order, to begin)*

- I. *Shall Students be included on all Contract Faculty Hiring Committees? And if so, how?*
- II. *Shall Outside Faculty (read: outside of department/discipline) be included on all Contract Faculty Hiring Committees? And if so, how?*
- III. *Other questions as raised along the way.*

#### **Related Resources:**

- a) [AP7120 Document \(Clean\)](#)
- b) [From 4.3.2p to AP 7120A Contract Faculty Hiring \(Slide Deck from May 21<sup>st</sup> Special Listening Session\)](#)

I. *Shall Students be included on all Contract Faculty Hiring Committees? And if so, how?*

- Senators advocated for student inclusion in the hiring process but opposed the recent draft giving students equal voting power on contract faculty hiring committees; noted students are not discipline experts and may lack full perspective on what makes an effective teacher
- Teaching demonstration piece of interview process was referenced by associate faculty as possible advantage/disadvantage if prior student(s) included
- Senators expressed support for including students in hiring committees, emphasizing that students can provide valuable insight and that a truly student-centered institution should consider their perspective in decision-making.
- Senator spoke in favor of including students in all aspects of the hiring process except confidential materials, emphasizing that engaging adult learners respects their experience and prevents perpetuating outdated "sage-on-the-stage" models of higher education.
- Logistical concerns mentioned for scheduling six-person committee
- Senators noted that students on hiring committees provide valuable perspectives on teaching effectiveness, communication, collaboration, empathy, and anti-racism, even if not discipline experts; they emphasized that operational procedures can support consistency and reduce bias, and cited examples of effective student participation in other hiring contexts.
- Senator suggested creating a non-voting student advisor role on hiring committees to provide feedback on teaching demonstrations and candidate questions, allowing student input without granting full voting power.

- President Stover concluded the topic by referencing [CCR §51023.7](#), noting that governing boards must give reasonable consideration to student recommendations on hiring and evaluation of faculty, administration, and staff.
- II. *Shall Outside Faculty (read: outside of department/discipline) be included on all Contract Faculty Hiring Committees? And if so, how?*
  - Senator noted that outside members have historically been used as needed for expertise or staffing and questioned the requirement as all-or-nothing.
  - Senator Ohkubo emphasized that including outside faculty is best practice for providing an impartial perspective on teaching, communication, equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), and soft skills, noting it does not delay hiring processes and that operational safeguards exist to ensure committee efficiency and consistency.
  - Senators spoke in favor for diversifying the hiring committee and thus faculty and noted the procedure can always be revised.

President Stover announced the discussion item's time concluded but will be brought back at the following meeting with Senator Bunas and Senator Melvin first in the queue.

## BREAK

## INFORMATION

### Presentation on Three New GenAI Features Debuting in Canvas

Introducing Distance Education Director Lisa Beach for presenting, President Stover announced the rest of the time would be dedicated to the Information Item: a presentation on the three new opt-in Gen AI features in Canvas.

L. Beach attended Canvas' annual conference, [InstructureCon](#), where a partnership between Instructure and OpenAI, was announced. L. Beach:

- Demonstrated in a test Canvas course three Tools:
  1. **Discussion Summary** – Instructor-only tool that summarizes discussion posts using AI; helps instructors identify misconceptions or gaps in student responses. Can refine summaries by keyword context.
  2. **Smart Search** – AI-enhanced search available to faculty and students; searches course content contextually, not just literal text matches, helping locate assignments or topics.
  3. **Khanmigo Teacher Tools** – College-level prompts for discussion and teaching support; generates discussion ideas by subject; teacher must manually copy/paste prompts; doesn't analyze course content.
- Noted the first two tools are still in Feature Preview, actively being developed and refined.
- Informed the body that each tool's "nutrition facts" can be searched to determine underlying AI technology

### Senator Q &A:

- Asked: how to verify privacy and intellectual property policies for AI tools in Canvas, particularly regarding data Open AI may access or store from course content.
- Answered: Canvas/Instructor tools terms of use and "nutrition facts" detail FERPA compliance, handling of personally identifiable information (PII) like student IDs, and which tools read course content. Recommended checking OpenAI's official privacy policy and data usage terms to see what is collected and stored.

- Referenced: [spreadsheet](#) of relevant links in the Canvas community for privacy and compliance information ([PDF linked here](#))

Senator Tircuit made a motion to move the item to the Discussion Agenda of the next meeting, seconded.

Point of order

- Senators concerned that AI tools in Canvas were implemented without faculty input and may undermine critical thinking, skill development, and intellectual property, while raising ethical and privacy issues. Concerned AI undermines faculty responsibility to give individual attention, devalues student contributions, and interferes with proper time management and teaching obligations.
- Clarified: AI tools in Canvas are entirely opt-in, have not been implemented by default, and using them is not mandatory.
- Question of purview and if the Academic Senate should consider whether introducing AI aligns with academic standards and excellence, while respecting faculty academic freedom.

With no time remaining on the item, President Stover concluded the meeting by asking faculty to consider their responsibility to the students, their future, and the workplace they are entering, which is requiring them to use AI.

**ADJOURNMENT** 5:00 p.m.

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#### **ALL FACULTY MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND ACADEMIC SENATE MEETINGS**

This Academic Senate is created to secure the professional rights and to carry out the responsibilities of the faculty of the Sonoma County Junior College District. The faculty have the traditional right of college faculty to participate in the governance of the college. As specialists in specific disciplines and as experienced instructors, the participation of the faculty in the governance of the college is essential for the district's pursuit of its mission. As professionals, the faculty have the right and a duty to set professional and ethical standards for the conduct of their profession and to promote the excellence of their profession. In order to achieve these ends and in accordance with Title 5 of the California Administrative Code, Subchapter 2, Sections 53200-53205, this Academic Senate is established.