

Academic Senate President's Report
Wednesday, 4 September 2024 / John A Stover III, PhD

I hope everyone had a wonderful Labor Day weekend. Welcome to September.

Today we will consider a resolution on Generative AI writing tools as brought forward by English faculty Purnur Ozbirinchi. When Dr. Ozbirinchi approached the Academic Senate over the summer with this resolution, we provided technical assistance meeting language and formatting requirements – as we do with any resolutions brought forward by faculty – and took particular care to craft resolutions that put the discussion of Generative AI Writing Tools squarely within the Academic Senate as relevant to so many areas of our [10+1 purview](#) including, but not limited to: standards or policies regarding student preparation and success (Item 5); grading policies (Item 3), and; policies for faculty professional development activities (Item 8). I am grateful to Dr. Ozbirinchi, library faculty, the Distance Education Office, and other members of the community who supported the development of this resolution for our consideration.

Also on the topic of Generative AI, VPAA Holcomb and I have been discussing how to better promote awareness, understanding, critical discourses, and professional support for the academic success of our institution writ large and all faculty, students, professionals, and administrators specifically. Sonoma State has demonstrated strong messaging and collaboration between Academic Affairs and Academic Senates in the CSU system ([see here](#) and [also here](#)), and I seek to develop a local version of this in support of our local deliberations.

An issue was raised during the drafting of the resolution as concerns our local resolution process. Historically, SRJC Academic Senate has not been a “resolution focused” senate, and we do not have an official process or policy on the topic. With that said, and generally speaking, faculty bring issues forward in Open Forum and in conversation with ASEC, and sometimes follow up with resolutions when they feel strongly about a topic. At the ASEC level, we work with and support faculty in their efforts by providing technical support specifically on resolution formatting and structure. It’s clear that processes such as these deserve to be clear and transparent in a way that is equally accessible to all faculty, so in the Spring we will be convening a Senate Taskforce to update Bylaws and consider the establishment of a Senate handbook for processes such as resolution development and adoption. [The ASCCC Local Senate Handbook](#) provides us with a blueprint for taking on this important work, and you can review their [“Adapting the Resolution Process for Local Use”](#) here.

Another area in which we are working to establish clear processes has to do with the faculty role in updating Board Policies (BPs) and Administrative Procedures (APs). My goal is to support robust faculty participation when it is offered as it was recently for work on AP/BP 8.2.6 (Probation, Dismissal, and Readmission). I’m grateful to Jessy Paisley for accepting the faculty

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lead on AP/BP 8.2.6, and I've recommended to her that much of the work occur asynchronously and over shared documents and discussions. I'm looking forward to their expert contributions to this process.

[Our existing AP 2410 \(linked here\)](#) is helpful to us all in this regard as it outlines (but does not closely define) processes for work to be carried out by the Academic Senate. I've included an excerpt, with items 2 and 4 highlighted as they indicate the Senate's role, and I'll be working with Dr. Garcia to more specifically define this process specific to 10+1 concerns.

[AP 2410 Board Policies and Administrative Procedures](#)

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Process for Development of New and Revised Policies & Procedures

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2. If the subject matter of a policy or procedure is under the purview of the Academic Senate, the Academic Senate President, in consultation with the Academic Senate Executive Committee, shall assign a lead faculty member or members as deemed necessary to work with the lead administrator to prepare the draft.

...

4. The lead shall prepare a draft policy in consultation with District subject matter experts and the Superintendent/President or designee, and submit the draft to either the Cabinet Administrator or the President of the Academic Senate. If a policy requires an accompanying procedure, the procedure shall be drafted and submitted concurrently.

Within the first two weeks of the semester, it's already become clear to me just how expansive and demanding the job of the Senate President truly is. So please be patient with me as I adjust to this new reality, and please do not hesitate to remind me of a request, email, or need you've expressed that has not been answered or met. I do ask that you give me at least 2-3 full working days to reply to emails. Thank you for your help and patience, and let's have a great month ahead!