

Faculty Forum Debrief

Attendance: about 70 in Newman Auditorium, and 8-10 in Petaluma

(Faculty total: ca 1182; ca 300 Contract/ca 982 Adjunct—kātā HR stats)

- Theme: *The Illusion of Inclusion*

Many Faculty feel that, though inclusion is what is advertised, that the results of processes actually look like the decisions had already been made and faculty input was not actually used; examples: Measure H and 2030; the SIS RFP; The Bookstore change; Committee structures such as the newly combined SSEC (formerly Student Success, Equity, and Basic Skills)

- Theme: Faculty Hiring

Many faculty ardently argued that the procedure for hiring faculty needs to change, and that the work by the senate subcommittee on revising the policy need not have been tabled by the senate as it was. The broad consensus of those attending seemed to be that faculty on hiring committees should be involved in the process to the end, and have more ownership in general.

- Theme: The Corporate Model

Many described the movement taking place over many years, of higher education being legislated and administrated like a for-profit corporate enterprise as opposed to a public good. Our institution has seen a substantial increase in administrators during the same period that enrollments and the faculty workforce decreased. In many quarters, but not all, administrative styles have tended to be top-down, and administrators sometimes seem to operate under the assumption that they are bosses and faculty are line employees.

- Theme: Faculty Voice, Faculty Power

We are powerful, but we have to consciously use our power. We can change things, but only if we collaborate and organize. Those who have tenure should use it. And those who don't have tenure should not let that be an excuse for not speaking up. When we work together, AFA and Senate, we have a lot more power. If we as a faculty stand together as an army behind, for example, the senate president, a lot more gets done. And get involved! Too small a percentage of faculty sign up to do the work of shared governance. We need more. Run for the Senate and the AFA Council. Volunteer to be on committees and task forces.

Some specific suggestions made: A resolution of no confidence in the Measure H process (and others?); A PDA Day slot for more Faculty Forums like this one. Publications such as AFA Dialogue and Close to Home in the Press Democrat.

- Kai tā loipa (et cetera)

There were many other specific things mentioned, such as the complexity of department chairs being in a position of authority over colleagues, Lab/Lecture equity, and others.

It must also be recognized that there are dissenting opinions on some issues among faculty. For example, the idea that online instruction is sometimes injudiciously maligned was voiced. We also need to keep sight of the diversity of opinions and experiences among us.

Between Friday and Today:

The Administrative Leadership of two committees discussed at the forum reversed their previous no to yes. We have new faculty seats on those committees.

Mark Kay has initiated a proposal to have a “Faculty Listening Session” in which faculty voice their concerns to her directly. She approached both Julie Thompson and myself. I think this is a good idea and I will work to make it so.

Ultimately, it would be better to solve our problems by conversation and debate rather than by war.