

The COVID-19 Academic Senate Resolution

April 1, 2020

Whereas, The COVID-19 pandemic will most likely render Santa Rosa Junior College, along with the rest of the county and the state, under a shelter-in-place order for at least the remainder of the Spring 2020 semester, making the completion of the semester by remote means necessary, implicating items enumerated in the Academic Senate's purview, or the "10 + 1",; curriculum; degree and certificate requirements; grading policies; faculty professional development; processes for institutional planning and budget development; and, especially, standards and policies regarding student preparation and success,¹

Whereas, Many faculty members are neither trained nor approved for online instruction, and some disciplines, courses, or sections of courses, in the judgment of discipline experts, cannot effectively be taught online, or otherwise remotely,

Whereas, Both faculty members and students, as a result of the unfolding pandemic and quarantine measures, now have varying levels of access to necessary equipment and instructional materials, which may be scattered between home and District sites or completely unavailable, and

Whereas, Electronic, internet, social media, and other modern technologies pose potential threats to privacy and academic freedom, especially in the hands of political activists that target college professors or infiltrate zoom meetings,²

Resolved, That the Academic Senate exercise its right to advise the Board that, in the judgment of the Academic Senate, the district should defer to faculty departments and discipline experts in determining which courses and student services may be transitioned to modified or remote form, and in determining methods for accomplishing transitions; and that the district should purchase only the instructional equipment and software that the faculty requests,

Resolved, That the Academic Senate advise the Board of its judgment that, some faculty members and departments having determined the impossibility or fatally compromised quality of remote instruction and student services, there is a significant need for the Board and Administration to work with the Chancellor's office to approve expanded allowances for incompletes, and for the Board to approve maximum local flexibility for students to exercise Withdrawal and Pass/No Pass options,

Resolved, That the Academic Senate supports making facilities available to the faculty so long as the District can do so safely, and providing students access so that they may retrieve materials they need to complete classes while adhering to shelter-in-place orders; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate advise the Board of the necessity of supporting faculty members' academic freedom and privacy rights, and students' rights to privacy and confidentiality, in the face of politically motivated attacks; and further that the Board support the Administration in publicly objecting to for-profit and other corporate attempts to exploit the Coronavirus situation to access and exploit student and faculty data.

¹ <https://covid19.ca.gov/>; Title 5 §53200 (c)

² <https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/News/video/fbi-warns-zoom-privacy-concerns-69890809>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/02/19/trump-era-campus-conservative-groups-are-fighting-one-another/>