

Academic Senate President's Report
4 February 2026 / John A Stover III, PhD

Congratulations for making it through what felt like the 800 days of January. The 28 days of February are here, and with them arrives the [Year of the Fire Horse](#) and the passing of the [Year of the Wood Snake](#) as marked by the Chinese New Year. For me, this New Year marks the transition from one of shedding and leaving behind what doesn't serve us, to one of building up and into the future with earnest, honest, full fledged partnerships in support of not only our students' success but also our robust participation in shared governance. I take my responsibilities to facilitate the voices of faculty and students seriously, and last Friday's Senate Retreat was a wonderful reminder why this is so important. We successfully practiced Pro / Con / Parliamentary mic deliberation, and we'll bring this technique for amplifying Senator's voices to a low stake Action Item sometime soon. Before we do so, however, we'll first need to figure out how we're going to queue up items for voting when this form of deliberation is implemented, and at the ASEC planning meeting tomorrow (February 5th) we'll start this planning process. We'll also bring forward a future discussion topic supporting the institutionalization of [students' 9+1 right to participate](#), too. As always, our ASEC planning meetings are open to Senators' attendance ([we meet on zoom from 8:30am to 10am each Thursday](#)). Email me directly if you would like to attend.

We have two sets of minutes today, and I hope we can finalize both. One technical note, when voting is unanimous, we don't have to list out the votes by name as the attendance record captures those details. We also have two information items, and I hope everyone read our VPAA's report and has questions ready. Also, the item concerning the timing of the commencement ceremony has already been reviewed and approved by AFA and SEIU, so please keep that in mind when our VPSS presents. Today's consent item would enable us to quickly form a resolutions workgroup in support of putting forward statewide resolutions in time for [Academic Senate for California Community Colleges \(ASCCC\) 2026 Spring Plenary](#) which will be in Santa Rosa this April (9th to 11th). I am engaging in some fundraising in support of bringing as many Senators as possible to Spring Plenary, which will be at the Hyatt Regency in Railroad Square. I have also reached out to ASCCC leaders with an invitation to tour the campus on Wednesday, April 8th, and I plan to host a reception sometime between 10am and Noon that same day. Mark your calendars now in the event you can join us.

In addition, I have requested an ASCCC local visit in support of continued education and dissemination of our [10+1 rights and responsibilities](#). The recent concerns brought forward

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around the rollout of new student emails and identification numbers made it clear that continued education of the 10+1 is important for the health of the body and our role in participatory governance. I appreciate everyone's help in recognizing the many ways in which we contribute as faculty members.

Today we return to AP7120A, and at our final meeting in Fall 2025, additional concerns were made regarding final decisions by the college president, pre-hiring and retention practices, and fairness in teaching demonstrations particularly for associate faculty. I will address each in turn here.

First, final decisions concerning contract faculty hiring rest with the College President. Because hiring is a confidential process, details about how final decisions are reached and/or related details cannot be shared publicly. What can be shared is whether or not policies and procedures were followed. Also, the final steps of the hiring process includes confidential reference checks that are completed by the College President and related Vice Presidents. I ask Senators and all faculty to remember that the Academic Senate and Screening and Interviewing Committees are in the business of making recommendations. This can feel disappointing when our recommendations are not followed, but as recommending bodies, it's important to remember a core value in our work – we are here to contribute, not control. Also, the body successfully enabled the ability of committees to rank their final candidates. This is an option for recommending final candidates to the College President, and not a mandate or requirement. Much like our work in updating AP7120A, we exist in collaboration with our District partners.

Second, pre-hiring and retention practices, particularly as concerning ongoing faculty professional development, are topics we will address once AP7120A is successfully updated and implemented. I've already been in conversation with our VP of HR in reviewing their efforts to support local faculty and staff as drawing from regional best practices. We are also working to agendize a March Human Resources update that will address not only recruitment and retention efforts but also operational matters such as bias training and onboarding. While the latter matters are not procedural, members of the Executive Committee and I do hear the concerns that have been brought forward to date and are working diligently to get these matters addressed. Finally, the recent relaunch of the Faculty Professional Development Committee will also serve us well in this work going forward.

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Finally, as far as fairness in evaluating teaching demonstrations for outside and associate faculty, I want to remind everyone of the nature of the Interview and Screening Committee (SIC) process, which going forward will include some form of student interaction demonstration. In all matters during the SIC process, only the information presented as part of the application and screening process is taken into consideration. At no time can past, previous, outside, or other experiences or contexts be brought into the equation. If such references are made, they are – and should be – removed from the SIC's consideration. I recommend that anyone with additional questions about this concern speak directly with their Department Chair and department colleagues prior to starting any new contract faculty search and SIC-related processes.

I do hope, as I've mentioned before, we can complete our recommendations for AP7120A this semester and before any more time is lost before updates can be made to this 1990/2009-based policy. We are working in collaboration with the District in making these recommendations, and it's important we remember that collaboration requires, in the best sense of the word, working with someone to produce or create something, in this case AP7120A.

In other news, Spring CoPs have been proposed and announced (as of Monday, February 2nd), and there's room for two more CoPs should anyone else wish to still lead them. If I receive any additional CoPs, I'll be sure to add those to the options already announced. Later this semester we'll start the process for next year's CoPs, which will hopefully enable more proposals to come forward. Generally speaking, we can offer around six (6) CoPs with 10-12 faculty members each academic year. And, hopefully, one last plea for volunteers for the few remaining seats on committees for this semester.

In closing, I want to thank all the Senators and Executive Committee Members who were able to attend our [Spring Retreat last Friday \(30 January 2026\)](#). It was a productive, insightful meeting, and we gathered a lot of good topics for future agenda items, as well as surfaced some issues we are looking into in the meantime as related to student success and course enrollments. I'll continue to update the body as I work to maintain our voice in participatory governance matters, and thank you once again for entrusting me with this meaningful work on your behalf.