



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH

OFFICE OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

February 8, 2019

TO: Dr. Jane Conoley, President
FROM: Dr. Norbert Schürer, Chair, Academic Senate
SUBJECT: Key Topics for Beach 2030

Community Compassion Communication

Dear President Conoley,

Greetings from the Academic Senate! We are happy to report our three key topics for Beach 2030: communication, community, and compassion. We understand these three topics as long-term strategic goals and priorities. In other words, we hope that CSULB will become a stronger **community** with better **communication** and more **compassion** for those within and outside our community over the next ten years. We fully recognize that these are not separate and distinct goals, but overlap—and we believe that that is a good thing because each of our goals reinforces the others. We propose to pursue these goals in many ways and with specific initiatives, some of which we will mention in this memo, and some of which we will develop in the years to come. We hope that you will consider these goals as you put together the goals for the entire University, and we understand that CSULB will allocate resources to these goals over the next decade.

One of our overarching goals is to strengthen the CSULB **community**, which (as we all know) consists of students, staff, faculty, administrators, and alumni. More specifically, we hope that we can imagine a community of pleasure where students enjoy their classes; faculty look forward to teaching, research, and service; staff are excited about coming to work; and administrators appreciate the task of supporting the other groups—because all of this will improve our students' learning. Attending or working at CSULB should be fun!!! In the same vein, we hope that the CSULB community will become more diverse and that all members of the community will become more aware of each others' strengths and challenges. Currently, campus morale seems fairly low (a perception that the proposed campus climate survey will confirm or disprove), but regardless of the survey results a stronger community will lift all of our spirits. It seems that we have lost the spirit of community that we had about ten years ago (before that particular round of budget cuts), so we should consider reintroducing some of the programs that worked well previously, but were never reinstated, such as University 100, Partners for

Success, or Kaleidoscope. Specifically in terms of the Academic Senate, we plan to build a stronger community in terms of participation in shared governance, perhaps through changes in the Policy on Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) and certainly through more outreach (see below). Other priorities such as increasing tenure density (since tenure-line faculty can be more committed to our CSULB campus) or creating a Faculty Resource Center with a faculty lounge (for that particular subgroup) also fall under this heading.

Our second high-level goal is to focus on **compassion**. This means for instance caring for the physical and mental well-being of all members of our community. If faculty and staff feel good about themselves and have reasonable workloads, they will be better equipped to support students, and if students are well they will learn better. If administrators lead with compassion, they will know that their efforts improve campus life. If we are a 'wrap-around university' where students don't fall through the cracks, we will all be stronger. In the Academic Senate, we plan to communicate our ideas above and below with compassion. Compassion also means creating processes and procedures that work for all members of our community and that are applied in a personal and humane manner rather than technocratically. Of course, compassion includes compassion towards our physical plant (and our planet) in terms of sustainability.

Good **communication**, our third goal, is both a priority in itself and a necessity for achieving the other two goals. Communication needs to improve within the University (for instance between the Academic Senate and the rest of campus), and between CSULB and our Long Beach and California communities. Communication must include many ideas and positions, both tried and true as well as innovative. The Academic Senate might simplify procedures, rethink our council and committee structures, be more transparent, and do more outreach to let the campus community know about our work. We might use more social media and invite members of our campus community to specific meetings. Also within the University, we might consider better ways of highlighting the wonderful contributions of our students, staff, faculty, and administrators. As a whole, CSULB could communicate better with our community outside campus, for instance by bringing parents onto campus more or going out to high schools, community colleges, churches, neighborhood associations, etc. more consistently. We should certainly communicate the value of a liberal arts education beyond preparing for specific professions, both within and beyond our CSULB campus.

In other words, communication, community, and compassion are goals that we in the Academic Senate, and we as a CSULB community, should prioritize for the next ten years. We hope you concur.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Norbert Schürer". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Dr. Norbert Schürer