



Greetings!

To assist you in reporting to your department colleagues, please see the following summary of our last Representative Assembly meeting, held on **Thu. Dec. 4**. Follow the hyperlinks for more information.

REMEMBER TO [APPLY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT](#) IF YOU'RE ELIGIBLE

- At the end of each Fall and Spring, we remind part-time colleagues that you may be eligible to file for unemployment once the semester ends.
- The last day of employment this Fall is December 23, so you can apply on December 24. You can claim unemployment through until the next semester that you work: so it could be through Jan 4 or Feb 15, 2026, depending on your assignment.
- The FA Part-time Faculty Toolkit has resources for [filing for unemployment](#) and a [calculator](#) that helps you organize your SMC paystubs and reporting.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES (BOT) MEETING, 12.02.25

- The Board held a two-hour Closed Session --twice as long as usual--during which they must have been discussing the budget and negotiating proposals (the purpose of the closed session).
- Prior to the closed session, Peter spoke, reminding them that:
 - they have already been imposing layoffs on faculty (in the hundreds) by continuing to cut sections and counseling hours
 - that the only way out of this is through strategic growth, as the recent successful offering of extra high-demand sections shows (grant funding was used to open additional sections of high-demand classes, which began filling up immediately); and *not* by imposing further sacrifice and hardship on faculty. The college doesn't actually have an enrollment problem, they have a scheduling and class availability problem.
- We'll see what happens next: Following up to track how effectively those grant monies were spent should be a priority. The success of those additional sections should be tracked. But there is little confidence that any of that will happen. There is little meaningful follow up of this sort, the kind of data collection that should be happening as a matter of course.
- In open session, they once again heard a bleak student enrollment report from VP Teresita Rodriguez that described – once again – continuing declines in enrollment projections for Winter and Spring 2026. And once again, Board members asked no questions. So, Peter did:
 - How do you think offering a greatly reduced number of sections in Winter will affect student enrollment? I imagine it would decrease it
 - How do you think cutting counseling hours in Fall might have affected the enrollment of students for Winter and Spring?
 - How do you think slashing Counseling in Winter by 6000 hours might affect enrollment in Spring and beyond?
 - These are the kinds of relevant questions that should prompt greater accountability,

meaningful data collection and long-term strategic decision making. But this is not happening.

- They also received two reports (the college's Student Equity Plan (2025-2028), and the long-awaited college Master Plan for Education (2025-2030) which are supposed to inform a more action-oriented strategic plan process.
 - It's ironic that as we face tangible evidence of a lack of leadership and planning, we have new plans for plans.
 - However it did spur a lively conversation among the trustees, wondering what we can become? Where should we focus our attention? What is our strength?. Peter: I don't remember anyone stressing that the college's faculty are among its greatest strengths. In sum, it was a dispiriting board meeting.

RECAP OF DR. ROY'S VISIT TO THE REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

- As a reminder, [Dr. Roy](#) is a current SMC Trustee now running for the [District 24](#) State Senate seat currently held by State Sen. Ben Allen. Seeking support for his candidacy, Roy conducted a Q&A with RA members at our November meeting.
- The FA will arrange for other candidates to visit in the Spring. Once we've heard from them all, the Assembly can decide who - if any of the candidates- we would like to endorse.

COUNSELING CUTS UPDATE

- As of yesterday, counseling areas still had not been given concrete numbers for their Winter assignments, though Winter session is imminent. This means that many of our colleagues have no idea whether they have employment in Winter, which is just weeks away. Consider what this does to someone attempting to meet financial obligations, bills coming due, and attempting to manage basic household expenses. It's inhumane.
- This cavalier approach is driving counselors away. They and our students are suffering because of it.
- Note the initial roughly 6000-hour cut for winter is equivalent to a full intersession load for 33 full-time counselors or 55 part-time counselors with a maximum intersession load. It's mind-boggling.
- Peter is still waiting to hear from those in leadership how they made these decisions. He has contacted Pres. Jeffery, and the VPs of Business Services, Enrollment, and Academic Affairs, for a transparent accounting of how this came to pass in this particular way. When did they make these decisions? How were these specific cuts decided upon? What explains the delay in notifying counselors? So far, no response has been forthcoming.
 - *An update during the meeting:* Program leaders received their budget late last night (Dec. 3) and assignments are due 12.9. Again, counselors are finding out if they have a job and what their assignment is three weeks before the term (Winter) begins.
 - The college received a Student Success Block Grant (one-time funding for Winter only) that is housed in Academic Affairs, and a portion of it is going to Counseling to offset a small segment of the deep cut: Counseling got 680 hours restored of those 6000+ SEAP-funded hours that had already been cut. So it amounts to about a 10% offset.

HEALTH SCIENCES FACULTY REIMBURSEMENT

- We learned that Health Sciences faculty were again being made to cover the cost of background

and health checks when working at off-site facilities. The administration agreed to cover those mandatory screenings and provide timely reimbursement.

- Please notify the FA if there are other mandatory requirements that you're being forced to cover the cost of in order to carry out your assignments.

BUDGET FORUM

- Peter invited thoughts or questions from anyone who attended the forum (online or in person)
- Various impressions – they were uniformly critical:
 - “It could have been an email” since it was scripted with no authentic back and forth
 - It inspired “little faith in our leadership”
 - Multiple faculty members sent in questions inquiring why Pres. Jeffery would not return her ill-timed bonus and they all noted that question was ignored.
 - Pres. Jeffery exhibited no awareness, accountability, or leadership
 - The same people who oversaw the cratering of the college under their watch were the ones answering the questions
 - “Useless”
 - During a spending crunch they decided to hire a meeting moderator; why can't one of their 100 managers run a meeting instead?
- During the forum, the new VP of Student Success, Dr. Tania Acosta, has been announced.

PT FACULTY HEALTH COVERAGE SURVEY

- You should have received the survey from HR. It is initiated by the Chancellor's Office.
- The Chancellor's Office is collecting data regarding how many PT faculty members have health insurance, where they are getting it from and how many hours they're teaching. Districts are collecting this data and forwarding it on to the Chancellor's Office.
- Peter inquired to HR where the data from these anonymous surveys are going and why, and is still waiting for a response.
- That's fine as far as it goes, but the survey is a bit complicated, and there's no verification mechanism regarding the validity of the responses – i.e., anyone can fill out the survey - so the quality of the data cannot be guaranteed.
- Part-time faculty are welcome to go ahead and fill it out, but it's not mandatory.

RETIREMENT AND ERRORS IN SICK HOURS ACCOUNTING

- Peter emphasizes once again, if you are within a year or so of retirement, please notify Peter and Melissa in the FA as soon as possible. Your decision about your retirement timeline is confidential, but given the chronic and complex nature of the sick hours errors building in that lead time is essential. The FA needs that amount of time to investigate your particular situation and verify accuracy or remedy mistakes.

NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE

- There is nothing new to report. We are heading into our last negotiations meeting of the fall semester and will pick it up again in the new year and update you when we reconvene in spring. In the meantime, your support and our unity as a union is an ongoing source of strength.

- Peter and Elaine both reiterate that we are transparent with members about ongoing developments, so any rumors flying around about specific layoffs or program cuts are just that--unsubstantiated rumors. Disregard them.

We will pick up again in the spring, with our first meeting scheduled for **Thu. February 26, 2026.**

In closing, *thank you* for the work you do to keep the Association strong. Happy Holidays! ❄️🎵

Diane Arieff
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