

**Read at the General Faculty Meeting on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**By Senator Villanueva**

Dear Academic Senate:

In the last year of participating as a senator I have learned how much the academic health of this campus lies in the hands of this body.

With utmost care, we try to make the best possible decisions, taking into consideration many elements: students, programs, colleagues, service, administration, and the CSU system as a whole.

I am not sure if I will be joining you next year in the academic senate, since I hope other lecturers step up to infuse themselves in the opportunity of shared governance. It is important for them to see that they matter in all aspects of the university's future.

Over the last few years, it has been very rewarding to see the amount of support that lecturers have received from their peer tenure track faculty in the senate.

Today we are considering an important decision: changing the Senate Constitution to recognize lecturers as members of the general faculty and therefore their participation in chair elections.

While the CBA clearly includes part-time faculty as faculty, there is a culture of exclusion of lecturers in many aspects of the CSU. This exclusion persists under the assumptions that 1- lecturers do not want to participate, 2- Lecturers are not qualified/not knowledgeable, 3- Lecturers are not invested truly in the university to "deserve" a vote/voice.

These ideas are faulty. While it is very important that lecturers should not be exploited, and that the university should increase tenure track density rather than continue to rely on part-time faculty, allowing lecturers to be excluded from critical shared governance weakens the university as a whole.

**1- Lecturers continually look to participate in opportunities that offer them professional growth.** It is essential to equip ourselves professionally in all sectors of the academic plan. Being a well-rounded individual will eventually reward us and it allows us to contribute to the university in more ways than just teaching. Our participation in this sense is a win-win for all.

**2- Though we understand that part-time lecturers' contracts do not compensate them for service, one can most definitely create other ways of rewarding lecturers for their service.** Lecturers in other CSU campuses such as Cal State San Marcos are offered stipends, other CSU's offer assigned time that ranges from 1- 3 units, as well as awards for service. Yes, the contract does not compensate lecturers for service, but that does not mean it cannot be done.

**3- That lecturers are not qualified/ not knowledgeable to serve or to vote has been the most outrageous of claims.** While I've heard it only a few times, those few are too much. In most departments/colleges throughout the CSU, the faculty body that instructs the future of our students, of this state, and possibly this nation is composed majority of lecturers who are hired and reviewed by tenured faculty. Those of us who decide to vote or provide service are engaged in the workings of the university.

**4- In regards to elections, I've heard that lecturers may not be truly invested to deserve a vote/voice.**

In a system that needs faculty retention (including lecturers), what a contradictory frame of thought to have – when the goal of the university is to retain, one must validate – validate the value of lecturers. Lecturers are not a disposable commodity of a privatized enterprise. They are not low-paid peons that should be carelessly ignored – that thinking is so counterproductive to our mission. This is a university built upon the principles of community. We cater to those students who the system might of have thrown under a bus. We have to practice what we preach.

If we want lecturers to be invested in the university, then we must value them, and encourage them to participate. Lecturers want the doors of inclusion to be opened, while safeguarding their rights. In actuality, excluding lecturers from shared governance also short-changes our students.

As co-president and lecturer rep for CFA, and elected lecturer rep for the Senate, I hear frustration from many lecturers about many aspects of exclusion. Some consider the rejection of lecturers in shared governance an insulting two-tier system that corrupts the unity of the faculty in the fight to protect public education, a modern-day “caste system” that disadvantages the faculty that teach the most students, whom meet urgent needs, but have the least input and are paid the least. I urge you not to shun or reduce the contribution of your colleagues. The strength of our faculty is in our unity, no matter your title, as you can see from the gains of our new contract.

Shared governance will only mean positive contributions for our most valuable and significant mission as educators – our students. In the words of Dr. Seuss, “I know, up on top you are seeing great sights, but down here at the bottom, we, too, should have rights.” Yet, truly we should not have a top to bottom system, we should all stand side by side with each other.

Thank you for your attention.