



Office of the  
President

June 21, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

The Faculty Senate held a special meeting today and it was a positive step towards moving forward together as a campus. While at times the comments were uncomfortable to hear, I value the honesty and passion demonstrated by the faculty. To those of you who provided comments and concerns: I hear you loud and clear. What you shared today is important, and working together, I am hopeful that we continue to shape an institution that thrives in the post-pandemic world.

I am sharing today's message with all of our constituent groups because one of the prominent themes of today's discussion was centered on communication, which is something that we can always improve across the entire campus. I heard a lot of frustration today with regard to a lack of communication, including as it pertains to our shared governance processes on campus.

Another one of the issues discussed today was the higher than average number of retirements and resignations and the subsequent effect on our campus morale. The pandemic opened a number of opportunities for many people to retire or seek other employment for multiple reasons, ranging from personal satisfaction to career advancement to higher compensation. The many job opportunities we are seeing across the region, state, and nation would not exist if the Great Resignation were not impacting all institutions and sectors. And despite the discomfort that change sometimes brings us, I am proud of how many of our employees have been able to advance their careers in the past two years, both internally and externally.

It is also important that we recognize the stress and constant change that the pandemic imposed upon each of us, testing our resolve both at home and on campus. It is the equivalent of being in overdrive for 2 ½ years without having the opportunity to slow down. Your vice presidents and I are not immune to the difficulties that COVID-19 brought to all of us.

On a personal note, I have endeavored to address complex college-related situations in collaborative ways in spite of the pandemic. I have tried not to add any unfair amount of pressure on others as we made tough decisions to keep the campus as safe as possible. These stressful situations were intensified by the fact that I was unable to see or directly help my own family during these difficult times. I know you experienced similar situations in your personal life, with the added pressure of providing the best possible services to our students and community. I get it—I too feel the fatigue, and I too feel the frustration.

I have remained committed to serving you and the entire Cerritos College community, and I am appreciative to each of you who continue to support my growth as a leader. I value you, I respect you, and I care for our community. I understand there are many facets to our current situation on campus, and I respect the processes we are embarking on and appreciate the feedback provided through Faculty Senate. Shared governance is what makes each of our California community colleges strong. Can things be better moving forward? Yes, things can always be better, and I know that if we work together, we can emerge through the pandemic to reach the next level of achievement at Cerritos College.

I had an opportunity to talk with President Falcon after today's meeting and, with the support of the Faculty Senate, I would like for us to develop a plan to address the areas of concern together. As President Falcon indicated, "the Faculty Senate is first and foremost an institutional body intended to collaborate with and advise the district on matters pertaining to instruction." I intend to continue to collaborate with the Senate and keep this long-standing tradition alive, and I am excited to embark on this conversation with the campus.

Jose Fierro, D.V.M., Ph.D.  
President/Superintendent