

PCC FACULTY ASSOCIATION

1570 E. Colorado Bl. U-248
Pasadena, CA 91106
(626) 585-7261

facultyassociation@gmail.com

PCCFA Leadership Board

Roger Marheine

President

rmarheine@pasadena.edu

Preston Rose

Vice-President &

Part Time Faculty Liaison

pfrose@pasadena.edu

Jane Hallinger

Secretary

jshallinger@pasadena.edu

Danny Hamman

Treasurer

dehamman@pasadena.edu

Krista Walter

Director/Newsletter Editor

kristawalter@hotmail.com

Martha Bonilla

Director

mebonilla@pasadena.edu

Tony Jugé

Director

tsjuge@pasadena.edu

Rod Foster

Director

wrfoster@pasadena.edu

Suzanne Anderson

Past-President & Grievance

Officer

saanderson@pasadena.edu

Julie Kiotas

Grievance Officer

ajkiotas@pasadena.edu

OUR LEADERSHIP MOMENT IN A TIME OF CRISIS

Introduction:

The events that have transpired over the last month have shocked and angered the entire campus. A summary of issues follows

Lack of transparency, lack of shared governance:

The storyline begins at least as far back as February 8th, 2012, when PCCFA leaders met with Dr. Rocha in an hour-and-a-half meeting, effectively an informal beginning to contractual discussions. A frank and candid exchange occurred, or so we thought. A few days later, Dr. Rocha announced the draconian cuts that have caused a massive rupture in campus life. Most

discouraging was that at the February 8th meeting, Dr. Rocha said nothing about the cuts he was about to make a few days later. Thus, the cuts were made unilaterally by the administration, without collegial consultation and without any implementation of any shared governance mechanism. The Academic Senate and FA were not informed. There was no transparency.

Terrible human cost to the campus community:

We are particularly dismayed at the gross disregard for the human cost for all involved: for the students who have suffered terribly; for the retirees who were summarily fired after years of distinguished service; for the Part Timers who lost their jobs; for the deans (who work under a dark cloud anyway) who had to spend their valuable time

cutting sections, informing dozens of faculty of their status (a violation of contract that will be addressed through FA attorneys); for the ISSU staff who had to piece together new schedules on the shortest notice; for the many Part Timers who were assigned new classes as late as the last Thursday before the semester began.

The Cuts were Unnecessary! Educational integrity is compromised when held hostage by managerial myopia and fiscal expediency:

PCC faculty might recall that President Perfumo had claimed a "cash flow shortage" that would have led to cancellation of the Winter Intersession, 2010. Sadly, it is déjà vu as we hear the same "cash flow" refrain. It was false then, and it is false now.

To be sure, Sacramento has cut a little more than \$4 million from PCC's budget (as far as we know). Frankly, there must now be a rigorous questioning of the fiscal situation. How can we trust the numbers? We do know that the college set aside \$2 million last fall in anticipation of cuts. We do know the college 'swept' \$4 million last June into its Capital Outlays Fund to avoid

increasing its cash reserves. Cash reserves of nearly 15%, well above state guidelines of 5%, have not been touched. We do know that the college 'found' \$6.2 million to move a portion of U-bldg classes and staff last year. We do know that the college has earmarked \$11 million for technology. We do know it decided to cut 96 classes, lay off 45 faculty, and harm 3000 students. Educational integrity is our professional responsibility. The students are correct; **education is a civil right**. Sadly, District administration does not have the educational priorities of faculty, students, or staff. We must address this crisis.

Board of Trustees Meeting Wednesday, February 22, 2012:

Following an unprecedented 300+ student demonstration on first day of the Spring Semester, the Board of Trustees the following saw an equal number of participants, protesting against the budget and the loss of classes and teachers. However, over 100 students, faculty, staff and community members were prevented from entering the Board meeting despite pleas to let them in. Many people left in dismay or outright disgust at such treatment. It is the FA's understanding that President Rocha ordered the lockout of the scores of people who were outraged over the cuts. However, approximately 180 persons were allowed in. Sadly, the Board took the hostile position not to allow the many protesters to speak. While many had been on site since 6:00 P.M., they were not permitted to speak until after 9:00! The anger and tension mounted. Is it any wonder that twice they rose up, chanting and demanding to speak as is their legal, ethical, collegial, and civil right?

Academic Senate Meeting, February 27th, 2012:

Perhaps the most shocking, indeed bizarre, actions were taken by President Rocha at the Senate meeting. He packed the room with the entire Executive Committee (all vice presidents and the college attorney), took a number of chairs out of the room, declared 'fire code' restrictions to attendees, and locked out

senators, Associated Student members, and other interested members of the college. **Campus police checked identifications and prevented individuals from entering.** At least one Senate member left after a few minutes as all were extremely distressed at such heavy-handed tactics by the president of our college. Senate Executive leaders Dan Haley and Martha Bonilla vehemently objected to the menacing tactics. A motion to adjourn the meeting was passed and the meeting should have been concluded. However, the college attorney, when asked by President Rocha, claimed that adjournment violated the Brown Act. FA leaders have since determined that indeed the adjournment was legal and fully in compliance with the Brown Act. A number of people stayed after the adjournment as Pres. Rocha spoke for some time.

Since then, Academic Senate President Martinez has written a strong letter defending the collegial integrity of the Senate, and President Rocha has written a letter of apology. However, a disturbing unilateralism has turned into outright bullying. Has our college leadership lost its way? How can we have confidence in leadership that exhibits such gross disregard for shared governance, for our shared values, for our collegial institutions and for our rich history?

Our newsletter this month is intended to serve as an open and democratic forum wherein the PCC community can express its concerns about the state of our college.

LETTER FROM ENGLISH PROFESSOR READ AT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING ON MARCH 7, 2012

Dear Members of the Board of Trustees, President Rocha, and members of the Pasadena City College community:

I have come here tonight to beg the Board of Trustees to act quickly to stop the flood of bad decision-making by the current administration that is destroying the integrity of Pasadena City College. I wonder to myself how much cumulative damage has to occur before the Board decides to take decisive action to curb the excesses and the destructive acts of the current administration.

I also wonder if buying out ex-President Perfumo's remaining contract will eventually seem, in retrospect, like small change compared to the amount necessary to recoup the costs of the damage done by the erratic decisions, the unilateral decision-making, and the astounding mismanagement of the current administration.

We can talk about larger costs incurred by the present

administration, such as the approximately \$16 million spent to empty out the U Building, only to discover that there is no money available for a new building. So now the U-Building sits nearly empty. However, if this building is as unsafe as was proclaimed, why are people still using it?

Or we can talk about the costs of this administration's adding a lawyer and three VP positions, only to demand the firing or removal of academic deans because the deans are too expensive. It is far more expensive to recover from the destruction of dismantling the academic services structure on this campus and of leaving staff, deans, faculty, and students in the classroom vulnerable to the erratic, shoot-from-the-hip decisions of the current administration. Where will faculty innovation be when there are no deans to support faculty and to communicate cutting-edge curriculum to the administration and to other areas on campus?

What will student transfer rates be like when this administration finishes its irresponsible approach to class scheduling and reduces student access so

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dangerously that students must go elsewhere for their classes or else risk spending another semester or two to finish at Pasadena City College? Isn't student success our primary mission at PCC?

As for the latest of the Administration's proposed changes, what will be the cost of eliminating Winter intersession? Who does this decision serve? Have studies been done showing it to be better than the current schedule? Have collegial discussion and assessment taken place to determine the innumerable effects such a change will have on all segments of the college? Cancelling Winter intersession doesn't help students who must now fight to finish their transfer requirements with fewer course offerings. Cancelling Winter intersession does not demonstrate effective building use, and it is bound to upset annual sequential course planning. Who does it help?

Lastly, I wonder if it is possible to irrevocably damage the structural integrity of an institution through mismanagement, bad decision-making, and total disregard for others. The answer, I'm afraid, seems obvious: it is possible to bring about such damage. It is possible to destroy the stellar reputation of an institution and to replace employee pride and motivation with the cynicism and bitterness that dominate campus conversations at the present time. Note the absence of faculty at the recent Recognition event. I would like to demonstrate the very real possibility of such a destructive occurrence by using an earthquake analogy, something appropriate to a California institution. The situation at Pasadena City College has the key elements of a strike-slip fault, much like the San Andreas fault coursing its way through California: the deans, staff, faculty, and students are standing on one plate moving in one direction while the administration is standing on the other plate moving in an opposite direction. Anyone who lived here during the Northridge earthquake in 1994 knows what happens in such a circumstance: it brings a huge wave of destruction in its wake.

I hope the Board members realize that we are heading towards such an earthquake here at Pasadena City College and that you, the Board members, are the only ones who can successfully avert such a catastrophe. We beg the Board members to curb the excesses and the abuse of the current administration in order to preserve the life of the institution we all love and have done so much to nurture and to protect.

Thank you very much for your patience and for your attention.

Jill O'Hora
English

LETTER TO PRESIDENT ROCHA AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES FROM RETIREE

Dear Dr. Rocha and The Board of Trustees of Pasadena City College,

The abrupt firing of forty-five retirees one week before the beginning of the Spring 2011 semester and two weeks before an expected paycheck was a breach of trust between the faculty and the administration of PCC.

This action was carried out in an unprofessional manner, without regard for shared governance. It disrespected the time-honored tradition of retirees being included on the teaching roster.

These forty-five retirees represent hundreds of years of teaching experience and have contributed thousands of dollars to Scholarships, the foundation, and the Arts building fund. Their contribution to the PCC community and the lives of students is immeasurable.

Yes, the college faces nothing but hard decisions ahead. These decisions can and must be handled with open communication and respect for individuals.

Put the practice of hiring retired faculty back on the table. Discuss it openly, make your decision as you make the other tough ones to come...together with faculty, with care and respect.

In parting, I would like to share my own thoughts about heart and hope.

Essential to every thriving workplace is a willingness of its members to give of their discretionary time and energy. This willingness comes from a belief in shared values and trust in the intentions of leadership.

The heart of PCC is the caring individuals, both staff and faculty, that are willing to go the extra mile and invest their time and energy in the lives of students.

Above all else, we must preserve heart, so that we might have hope.

Respectfully yours,

M. Susan "Sue" Brown
Retiree
Visual Arts & Media Studies

CORRESPONDANCE BETWEEN PROF. KRIS PILON AND TRUSTEE GEOFFREY BAUM

March 6, 2012

Dear Board Members,

It saddens me to feel the need to again write to you again regarding the dismal state of affairs at Pasadena City College. Once known as a model of congeniality and cooperation, our college is presently in serious trouble. President Rocha has made several unilateral moves to reorganize the college, to cut classes, to retract his promises to retired Faculty and to change the overall College academic schedule. None of these moves was made in any true spirit of "shared governance" or professional congeniality, therefore all have resulted in a generalized feeling of discontent with Dr. Rocha, in mass demonstrations before the Board, and in Rocha's having to backpedal on several of these issues. Prepare yourselves for more of the same, as long as this kind of leadership is allowed to persist on our campus!

The President and his administrative colleagues continue to plan and coordinate in a void. Communication with Faculty is primarily through a small group of partisans: neither the communication nor the sense of "buy-in" to the Administration's plans are generalized campus-wide. If you didn't know this, you are now becoming aware of it. It is both embarrassing and unnecessary for this type of activity to occur on our campus. In is, in fact, outrageous. The constant turmoil is distracting us from our mission to provide quality education. We are failing to model democratic dialogue and open sharing of ideas and planning for our students. Is this "top-down" planning what we want at our institution? Faculty are an essential component of this College—they need to be fully included in thoughtful and thorough decision-making and planning for the benefit of the educational program and the students. This is not happening at present. As a resident of Pasadena for 30 years and as an employee of this College for 20 years, I am asking the Board members to initiate more aggressive review of the Administration's process and the plans they are proposing.

Sincerely yours,

*Kristin Pilon, Professor
Graphic Communications Technology*

* * *

March 8, 2012

Hi Kris:

I'm sorry you were not at the board meeting tonight. We agendaized and conducted detailed reviews of the Budget and Resource Allocation process, the Realignment Process, Accreditation, and Enrollment Management.

It is very important to me and my colleagues on the board that shared governance is actively practiced at PCC. At each step of the discussion tonight, for example, we asked specifically what the level of participation there has been by students, faculty, classified staff and managers. We even pulled up the committee list and reviewed who was participating in the decision-making process regarding recommendations about how to handle the upcoming budget cuts.

Each group was represented at tonight's meeting and their representatives offered first-hand testimonial about the inclusiveness and openness of the process.

We took several actions to adopt guiding principles for the college to use when making the very difficult decisions ahead about resource allocation, enrollment management and other issues going forward.

In addition, Dr. Rocha stated that he has responded positively to every recommended action brought forward by the Academic Senate.

We will continue our active oversight and policymaking role at the college in the interest of the community and, most importantly, for the students.

Thanks for touching base and see you in the neighborhood.

Geoff

* * *

March 12, 2012

Hi Geoffrey,

I was, indeed, at the BoT meeting on Wednesday. I heard the Administration's contention that the Faculty is being included at all levels of discussion, and I heard Faculty and Students complain that this is not the case. It is interesting to me that you choose to believe the former.

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The Faculty are as essential a part of this College as the students are. Are you listening to what we tell you? The Administration leads by dictate, not by cooperative, joint, shared discussion. You know as well as I do that the committees looking into the reorganization were established AFTER the President made his demand for realignment in December, not before. His decision is a done deal, and the Faculty input is a token, after-the-fact concession to make Mark appear to be using a shared governance process. Many participants who signed up initially are no longer attending, as they have become frustrated with the limitations of the process and discouraged by the overall message that this is a meaningless exercise. At present, only about a third of the original participants are still involved. I am a participant on both Task Team committees, we have been clearly told that no matter what ideas we come up with, the President will do as he pleases. So why do we bother? I guess we're hoping for the best. The Administration representatives you listen to are "yes" men to the President. There are no independent thinkers in their camp. What do you expect them to say? Do you really want to know the truth? You will only hear the same party line, over and over, from them.

The kind of top-heavy leadership Mark Rocha is exercising is not in the best interests of this College. He and Rick are following a path that will undermine and diminish the standard of excellence that PCC has been known for over the years. Some of the activities to cut Full Time Faculty (active and retired) are not only unconscionable, they reduce and damage the delivery of instruction to the students under our care. Mark's recent "take-over" of the Faculty Senate meeting was unbelievable-- do you really think he has established a positive, respectful relationship with the Senate by that action? Please consider both sides of the present situation, and listen carefully to what the Faculty tell you. There is a problem on this campus, and Mark and Rick are at the center of it. Talk is cheap, you know what you can expect the Administration to tell you. Use your power to rein them in until you can look fairly and clearly at some of the things on the table. Check their numbers. Ask hard questions. And listen to the voices of reasonable Faculty that tell you something is not right.

Thanks for your consideration of my opinion,

Kris Pilon

LETTER WRITTEN IN RESPONSE TO PASADENA STAR NEWS ARTICLE FROM FEBRUARY 25, 2012

February 27, 2012

Dear editor:

This is in response to "PCC Releases Salary Data: Faculty Raked In 4 Million in Overtime in 2012" dated Saturday, February 25, 2012 by James Figueroa and Brian Charles. Let's get the facts straight regarding the pay of long time Pasadena City College Professors.

First, let us address what you call "raked in". As far as I know it has never been a crime to earn a living working hard. At Pasadena City College we have never "raked in" money. Let me tell you about overload pay. Overload pay is an hourly wage for teaching another class beyond your normal full time class load. Mind you, a teacher is asked by the college to teach these classes because of skill and experience. This extra hourly compensation is much lower than normal pay for teaching the same class - you still need to grade, hold office hours and give the much needed attention to all students. The college has held firm to its mantra of "you want more money, well then teach more".

Second, let us talk about the skill of the faculty you mention in your article. You discuss high salary not mentioning the length of service at Pasadena City College and the degree level of these highly, skilled faculty. I also find it ironic that you briefly mention that most full-time faculty's base salary is well below the \$100,000 mark. You also fail to mention that there are approximately 900 teaching faculty who bring home less than \$10,000.000 a year. All full-time faculty teach three to five courses each and every semester, putting their heart and soul into the students. We are what make this institution the "flag ship" of the west coast. You should know that in each of those five classes there are between 30-200 students who receive premiere instruction from highly qualified teachers.

Third, let us talk about the large group instruction classes in which, yes, the instructors do receive additional compensation. In these courses there are a minimum of 200 students, who once again receive premiere instruction from the same hard working long time faculty members. Those large group instruction classes bring thousands of dollars to the college as well as save the college thousands of dollars. Mr. Figueroa and Mr. Charles, do you still want to use the word "raked in"?

Fourth, let us discuss Trustee Mann's comments. First, shame on you Janette Mann for your callous dismissal

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of the faculty who actually elected you to the Board of Trustees 28 years ago! It was less than a year ago Dr. Mann when you commented that "yes Pasadena City College administrators are very good at hiding the money - that is the way it has always been". This is shameful! You openly admit that you have been one of the elected officials running the college for all these years and you do not know how much money and how many sections you have authorized the college to offer skilled full time faculty! Are you the same trustee who calls skilled adjuncts "cheap", who fought against minimum office hours for these same individuals for years to help our many students? Have you forgotten why you are a trustee? Why don't you acknowledge that the strength of Pasadena City College is the highly skilled faculty? I am not only one of these highly skilled professors, I am also a taxpaying constituent of your area Dr. Mann - maybe it is time for you to go!

The new management at Pasadena City College is changing the structure, and teaching environment at Pasadena City College which is impacting our community colleges' esteemed reputation around Pasadena, California, and the country. President Mark Rocha has only been at Pasadena City College for one and half years. What the salary report did not show was the excessive amount of stipends that the Board of Trustees has authorized for the President and his five Vice Presidents and one lawyer. The community should be aware of how much money is spent on cars, Athenaeum membership dues, phone use, etc. Of course the faculty does not receive these bonuses! You refer to Summer School and Winter Intersession pay as stipends for faculty. Let's get real! This is an hourly wage for much needed classes that students require to keep them on their career paths. Mind you, faculty still teach the same as the regular semesters, including grading the hundreds of papers, answering e-mails, and meeting with students.

These days we hear everyone from President Obama all the way down to everyday taxpayers that an education is key to restoring our economy and our young peoples' futures. Yes, Mr. Figueroa and Mr. Charles, the students need skilled faculty more than ever. Years from now I don't believe you will hear graduates of Pasadena City College say "I am so thankful to Mark Rocha" for my success rather you will hear them say "I am so thankful for the tireless work of PCC teachers" that helped me in my career.

Respectfully,

A long time full time Professor at Pasadena City College and Taxpaying, constituent in Pasadena

OPINION PIECE BY PCC STUDENT FROM PASADENA NEWS NOW, MARCH 9, 2012

Opinion: PCC Board of Trustees Obviously Doesn't Hear Students' Voices

I am writing in response to the Pasadena City College Board of Trustees meeting on March 7th. (<http://www.pasadena.edu/board/granicus.cfm>)

First, I wanted to say that I am disappointed that the Board seemed to hear my (I spoke before item i), and other students and teachers words about the importance of classes and student access and the mistakes the Board has been making, and yet the next few conversations and items on the agenda were about further slashing enrollment (by Berlinda Brown), cutting winter session, and cutting class hours to a "carnegie hour" schedule (by the whole board).

The Board obviously did not hear the student voices yet — how much pressure do we need to apply before you start to take action, instead of just listening? Right now there is an ocean between your words and actions.

I want to follow up on the mention of a Time, Place, and Manner future agenda item. While it may be true that the board felt "threatened" by protests, that does not give them the right to limit our freedom of speech. Our nations founders declared their independence to break free from the tyranny of a nation that denied them civil liberties— what makes you think that we are willing to give up those rights today?

Having police search our backpacks at the door of the Board meeting on March 7th (illegal search and seizure), cutting the video feed of the last board meeting when students protested (infringing on freedom of speech), and continuing to prioritize buildings and big salaries while asking students to move to a trimester system with shorter classes will be met with stronger action by the students, and legal action if necessary.

There is NO place for a Time Place and Manner rule on this campus, or any other campus.

Last week I was handing out flyers on the school budget cuts when five PCC cadets came up to me and said I "need a permit" to hand them out.

Does this kind of intimidation belong on any campus? How would you feel if five police officers surrounded you, insisting "stop handing out flyers without a permit"?

I called the PCC police the next day and asked them under which school rule they had the right to stop me from handing them out. After a half hour on the phone, and three hours waiting for a call, there was no answer.

I filed a complaint with the PCC police, and received a call the next day from an officer who apologized for the cadets, admitted there was currently no "Time, Place, and Manner" rule, and the cadets had been retrained.

And now, days later, Mr. Martin is injecting a Time Place and Manner agenda item. It is sad that when we need our freedom of speech the most, people like Mr. Martin, with agreement from President Rocha, try to take it away.

I have contacted the American Civil Liberties Union. They have the resources to challenge these continued infringements on student rights. From the students perspective, the Board and PCC administration are ramping up infringements, rather than dial them down. Instead of learning from the mistakes of the last few weeks you are choosing to repeat them, and accelerate them. If a "Time Place and Manner" item is passed, or if the Board continues to use police presence for illegal search and seizure, if the Board or campus administrators continue to lock students out of meetings I promise you that the students will fight it using every resource, share it with every newspaper, spread it across the internet for all to see, and share these infringements far and wide and and vote you out of office.

I promise you that you will see new faces around you if you continue to harass and ignore the student voices. We will vote you out and we will not stand for these actions anymore.

We are tired of empty words. It is time that you open yourselves to student voices. I move that you remove "Time Place and Manner" from any agenda and never bring it up again. Do you think the students do not know that this has been tried before, every few years? Just because this is a 2 year school does not mean students have a 2 year memory.

Right now you have a choice to make. You can continue to think that you are doing a great job, continue on your current path and see board members around you voted away. Or you can immediately halt the infringements on student's constitutional rights, admit that things need to be done differently to prioritize classes, and let your actions reflect that.

I know that the Board of comprised of good people. But sometimes good people make the wrong choices. Please act responsibly and start making the right ones.

*Andrew Kane Bott
Pasadena City College student*

<http://www.pasadenanow.com/main/opinion-pcc-board-of-trustees-obviously-doesnt-hear-students-voices>

RESPONSE FROM TRUSTEE GEOFFREY BAUM, MARCH 10, 2012

Dear Andrew:

Thank you for coming Wednesday night, staying to witness to the entire board meeting and expressing your opinions as we considered the policy recommendations about how to address the budget crisis.

Thanks also for sharing the link to the video coverage of the Board meeting. The Board of Trustees has worked hard to make sure the proceedings and discussions are open, transparent, inclusive and collegial.

As you heard, the overriding budget priorities adopted by The Board of Trustees are:

1. Minimize the impact of state budget cuts on student access to classes
2. Minimize the impact of the state budget cuts on PCC employees

You can find the document online and distributed with the board packet: http://www.pasadena.edu/MeetDocs/board_15463_C.pdf

We also took time to explain the more than \$10 million in cuts that have already hit PCC and absorbed before any class sections were canceled. Also, unlike other school and college districts, not a single member of the PCC faculty or staff has been laid off or furloughed during this budget crisis (now in its fourth year). Nor has there been a reduction in benefits to PCC employees, who receive a fully funded pension and free medical, dental and vision benefits for themselves and their dependent family members.

The District has taken extraordinary measures to protect PCC students as well as faculty and staff during this budget crisis.

Unfortunately, there will be even more severe reductions in funding next year. PCC will no longer be able to completely shield the impact of these cuts on students, faculty and staff.

The Board has instructed the administration to meet these challenges and minimize the impacts while ensuring the financial stability of the District.

Finally, the Board is committed to ensuring freedom of expression, even if it means we must endure attacks, insults and misinformation during our meetings. This is one of the most precious aspects of our democratic process. In my professional life, I have worked to

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protect and honor journalists who spoke truth to power, exposed institutional corruption and risked their own lives in order to keep the public informed. It is an overarching principle I have maintained in my personal, professional and political life.

There is no desire or attempt to restrict freedom of expression at PCC. However, the board is also responsible to protect the safety of students, faculty and staff. The board directed the district to take reasonable measures to maintain a safe campus environment in compliance with our policy, which states:

It is the policy of the Pasadena Area Community College District that Pasadena City College seeks to maintain a safe, orderly, and constructive campus environment in which there is freedom to learn and respect for the dignity of all members of the College community. Students are expected to be responsible, honest, and non-violent in exercising their rights to free inquiry and free speech.

One just has to watch the news to know that campuses are no longer safe havens from gun violence. Also school board meetings have been the scene for shootings and other physical attacks. If you need me to send you links to some examples, just let me know.

The Pasadena Police Department presented credible information about new threats to the physical safety of students, faculty, staff and members of the public at PCC. In response, the Board directed that there will be no restriction on public comment and expression, but we need to take some measures maintain a safe and orderly environment to conduct the business of the district.

I look forward to seeing you at future board meetings and hearing your thoughts as the District deals with the many difficult decisions that need to be made in the coming months.

Sincerely,
Geoffrey Baum
President, Pasadena City College Board of Trustees
Member, California Community Colleges Board of Governors

<http://www.pasadenanow.com/main/pcc-board-president-responds-to-students-complaints>

LETTER TO THE PCCFA FROM THE LANGUAGES DIVISION

Dear PCCFA,

We are writing to express our concerns and discontent with the present state of the College. PCC was once known for its excellence, a model for all the other Colleges, the "Harvard" of our peers. Today, unfortunately, both faculty and students are frustrated. The students can't take the classes they need, and the faculty is distracted by all the changes and feel that our input is not taken into consideration. We invest time and energy to meetings and committees to save the College from arbitrary cuts instead of investing this time to our primary mission, our students. We feel that important decisions are made by the Administration without an open, direct dialogue in a true spirit of "shared governance" and collegiality.

In particular, the decision to change the academic calendar and replace it with a trimester is detrimental. It took us two years of negotiations to have the present calendar with the Winter Intersession. To eliminate the Winter Intersession is not beneficial to the students who can't take all the requirements during the semesters. Often, the classes are full, and students need to take English, Math and Science courses during the Winter when there is more time to focus. In addition, the huge gap in the summer is a set back to students' learning--personally I have to spend the first week of the semester to review what the students learned previously, so if there is more time between semesters they will forget even more. The Winter Intersession is beneficial to the faculty as well, since we need to have some time in the Winter to recharge ourselves and prepare new courses for the Spring Semester while other faculty have the opportunity to teach if they want to. Other Community Colleges in the Los Angeles area that had to cut courses in the Winter still kept the same calendar with Winter Intersession; therefore this is another reason why we should not eliminate the Winter Intersession.

In order to keep on providing excellence in teaching, the whole College must work together in a respectful atmosphere. Our concerns are an essential component of decision making in regards to important issues and changes.

Thanking you in advance.

Sincerely,

Rita D'Amico
Representing the Languages Division

We would like to express our deepest gratitude, appreciation, and respect to the faculty and students who graciously allowed us to reprint their letters and statements.