

University Senate Chair Report

September 2nd, 2025

Hi All,

Welcome back to another year! I'm very excited to be in this role, and I appreciate your support. We actually had a proper election for Senate Chair this go around, which is the first time in a long time, at least that I remember, that it wasn't just one person running unopposed. I'd like to acknowledge Professor Lisa Tremain for their willingness to serve in this position and their outstanding service to the University. The fact that we had a proper election tells me that folks are invested in this thing we call shared governance, and I find this very encouraging and inspiring for the coming two years of my term.

Admittedly, the Senate used to scare me, but now I find it to be awesome! As a new, young Assistant Professor, I got involved in service at the university level early with the ICC. I served on the CDC for a while, then the GEAR committee, and eventually served as Chair of GEAR. During that time, I would occasionally attend Senate meetings to report out on various things we were working on, and I was quite intimidated. I felt wholly unprepared as a laboratory scientist to be stepping into this shared governance thingy, with parliamentary procedures, administrators, and, oh my, was that the University President asking me questions?? Yikes! I've come a long way since then and never imagined I would be in this role. I also want to acknowledge the past two senate chairs, Professors Jim Wolglom and Monty Mola, whom I both served under as UPC Chair. Jim and Monty made the Senate fun, each in their own unique way, and I draw inspiration from them as I take the torch... errr, gavel, I suppose.

The week before classes started, I organized a pre-semester Senate Executive Committee (SenEx) retreat at the Adorni Center, followed by an optional kayak tour around Humboldt Bay led by two amazing student guides from Campus Recreation at the Humboldt Bay Aquatic Center. We met for two hours and had a productive meeting; afterwards, six of us went kayaking (I had my trusty paddleboard with me). We almost made a full Woody Island lap; however, the tide was a bit too low, and we had to turn around after getting stuck in the mud. It was a blast! I hope this becomes a new SenEx tradition (not the getting stuck in the mud part, but you get the idea).

During our retreat, I asked SenEx members to write down their nominal, everyday goals and what resources they would need to achieve those. I also asked members to write down their "moonshots" and what resources they would need for those as well. There was some variance in responses; however, a theme emerged in the type of resources we need to achieve our goals and moonshots: Time and People - unsurprisingly, our two most valuable commodities. We can't achieve our goals alone, nor can we do it hastily if we are to do it right. So I urge you all to step up and join the shared governance party. You don't have to be in the Senate to do things that the university will benefit from, nor do you have to sacrifice other things you are working on to make the time. In all likelihood, ya'll are already doing amazing things that make this a better place, so let's hear about it! Tell me about something amazing going on in your world, and we'll agendize it. Tell me about a resource you need to make something happen, and we'll figure it out. Let's stand on the shoulders of giants together!

Another theme emerged from the goals and moonshots responses, which I would describe generally as policy reform - not only in the way we discuss policy during our nominal 1st read, 2nd read process, but how we organize and keep track of out of date policies, policies that are no longer needed, or, to be frank, a policy website that is easy to navigate (no shade to those that make that site possible). I am inspired by the new Policy on Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines we passed last year and believe this ushers in a new means of transparency in this process. I look forward to organizing our policies and practices in a way that makes them

more transparent, more efficient, and creates more shared governance buy-in for the campus community at large.

In my future reports, I will detail more specific items that are being worked on, celebrate success, and inform the campus community of pertinent issues. In my very first Senate Chair's report here, I mostly just want to say thanks! (especially if you made it this far).

Let's have a great year, people!

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