

University Senate Chair Report January 20, 2026

Hi Folks,

Welcome back to another great semester and the start of a New Year! I hope you had a restful break and were able to spend some time with friends, family, and loved ones. My family visited Mt. Shasta to go skiing/snowboarding a few times, and we had an absolute blast. That being said, I am saddened by the tragic events that unfolded in Arcata on January 2nd, with a five-alarm fire leveling cherished local businesses and some apartments. We are fortunate that there were no casualties, and the community's response inspires me. If you feel so inclined, there are several "GoFundMe" varied fund raising events out there that are publicly accessible that you may contribute to.

If your head is spinning with all the leadership changes we are experiencing, then you are not alone. We have two new (well, kinda, one has been here for quite some time, and the other is from here, moved away, and now is back) folks in the top two positions on campus, President and Provost. As a reminder, we will also be conducting a national search for the VP of Administrative Affairs, VP of Advancement, and, eventually, a national search for a permanent Provost position. Yowza! This is a great time for us to assert and affirm our commitment to shared governance, to demonstrate our collegiality, and further advance our unique flavor among the largest public university system in the country. Today, I will highlight some concluding findings from GI-2025, as well as highlight the Student Success Framework introduced last fall by the CSU, CSU Forward. I truly believe we are in a great position to stand out here among our sister campuses, as much of this new framework that is being introduced, we already do and do well at that.

If you recall, last semester, we discussed and ratified a whole bunch of new large programs related to our Polytechnic build-out. I say thanks to those in the ICC and beyond who worked so hard on this. We should have somewhat of a break on these large curricular items in our agenda, at least for now.

Your head may also be spinning from the constant and ever-changing discussion of higher-ed from the current administration in D.C. I know many of you are really concerned, which you have every right to be. We will have some information for the campus community, I expect on February 17th, on the current and ever-changing financial aid landscape (again). I also want to remind you all of the collaborative work we did last semester with the "Know Your Rights" campaign. You may have noticed some new signs in many of our classrooms with a QR code. If you scan that code, it will take you to a site that describes what to do if immigration, customs, and enforcement officer(s) come to our campus. The most important thing is to remember, "Stay calm, be strong, and know your rights."

If you recall, our ITS project "Policy Management Modernization for the University Senate" was approved, and we will be getting to work on that later in the semester. Many of you have already started some of the important legwork by collecting metadata on some of our existing policies, including approval dates, responsible offices, and so forth. I want to thank you all very much for helping me out in this regard, and keep plugging away!

Last, and certainly not least, there is a large push to achieve accessibility compliance in our digital materials on campus by April 24, a daunting deadline, but I know we can get there. We had a spirited discussion in my own department on the challenges we face in making chemical equations, math equations, and the like, accessible in a digital format. Please don't be discouraged by this process. It will be difficult, and likely frustrating, but it's the right thing to do, and we have ample support. The team at Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) is prepared

to help you in so many different ways, be it helping you make your PDF documents accessible or helping you verify closed captions on your instructional videos. They got your back!
Alright, folks, let's have a great semester!

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